

ATTACHMENT H
MASTER SITE VISIT PROTOCOL

OMB CONTROL NO.: 0584-XXXX
EXPIRATION DATE: 00/00/20XX

IMPLEMENTATION SITE VISITS: MASTER PROTOCOL

Notes to site visitors

The following table is a master protocol of questions for all types of respondents that will be interviewed over multiple rounds of site visits. The table identifies generally the type of respondent that will be asked each question, but site visitors will identify the roles of each actual respondent prior to the site visit and determine which of the following questions apply (and should be asked) of each. No respondent will be asked all of these questions. In addition, any information that may have been gleaned from conversations with the grantees and partners during technical assistance should be documented and confirmed during the site visits. The questions in this master protocol apply to all pilot projects, unless otherwise noted. However, prior to the visit, each site visitor should tailor the protocol to the site to reduce burden and redundancy.

We will conduct three rounds of site visits using the questions included in Instrument ATH below. The first round will focus on the planning phase and early implementation of the pilot. The second round will examine pilot operations during its full implementation period. The third round will focus on the close-out of the pilot and discuss overall impressions, lessons learned, and challenges encountered. We will tailor the questions in the protocol by round to ask respondents about events as they happen (or to reflect on what previously happened since the prior visit) and to determine how their opinions or approaches changed over time.

Introduction

My name is [X], and I work for [NAME OF FIRM]. As you might know, we are evaluating the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training (E&T) Pilot Program for the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The SNAP E&T Pilot Program provides grants for 10 pilot sites to develop innovative SNAP E&T strategies to increase employment and earnings for SNAP work registrants, and reduce their reliance on public assistance. For the purposes of this study, we are interested in understanding how SNAP E&T pilot services are implemented and how differences in implementation affect participants' employment, earnings, and related outcomes.

My colleagues and I are currently visiting pilot sites across all 10 study states to collect information from a wide range of stakeholders involved in the pilot. We are learning about the implementation of the pilot programs at three different stages, as well as the challenges you encountered and lessons learned during the implementation and operation of the pilot. I want to start by thanking you for taking time to speak with us today. Your perspective and insights on these issues will be very helpful to the study.

Public Burden Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0584-xxxx. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 60 minutes including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this

I want to let you know that your participation in this interview is voluntary, and your responses will be kept private to the extent provided by law. We will not share the information you provide with any other people, including your supervisor and state-level staff. You may refuse to answer any question and may stop the interview at any time. There will not be any penalties if you refuse to participate in part or full.

We will take notes over the course of the interview so that we can remember the information we collect. We will use this information in our reports to FNS, describing the range of responses expressed by staff. The reports might list the names of organizations that contributed information, but we will not quote you or anyone by name or title. However, because of the relatively small number of organizations participating in the study, there is a possibility that a response could be correctly attributed to you.

I expect our conversation will take about 60 minutes. First, do you have any questions for me about the project in general or what we will be discussing today?

Instrument ATH. Topics, questions, and respondents for implementation interviews

Topics	Respondent				Round		
	Grantee- or state- level staff	SNAP local office staff	E&T provider staff	Community stakeholders and other partners	R1	R2	R3
Background							
What is your official job title or position?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
What services does your agency or organization provide?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
What are your primary responsibilities?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
How long have you been in this position?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
What are your responsibilities related to the pilot?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Motivation and goals							
Why did [state or organization] apply for or choose to participate in the pilot? What were the perceived opportunities? What were the perceived challenges?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Who within the state drove the effort to apply for the pilot?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Was there widespread support of the application? If not, who had concerns about the application and why?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
What are your site-specific goals for the SNAP E&T pilot?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
What outcomes will you use to measure progress toward the pilot's goals? How did you identify these outcomes? How are you measuring outcomes? How did you select your performance targets?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Why was the area covered by the pilot selected? Were other areas considered?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Why was the particular target population selected? Were other target populations considered? If so, why were they ruled out?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Why were the particular types of services/interventions chosen? Were other types of services or interventions considered? If they were considered, why were they ruled out?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
What benefits do you expect will accrue to the government as a result of the SNAP E&T pilot program? What benefits do you expect will accrue to participants? What benefits do you expect will accrue to the state?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Have your expectations about your anticipated goals or outcomes changed since approval of your pilot? If so, how and why?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Pilot administrative organization, partnerships, and staffing							
<i>Administrative organization and partnerships</i>	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
What is your organization's role in the pilot? Who is leading the planning, development, and implementation of the pilot?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
What other agencies, organizations, and providers are involved? What are each of their roles? How do the involved entities or their roles differ	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

[illegible]

Topics	Respondent				Round		
	Grantee- or state- level staff	SNAP local office staff	E&T provider staff	Community stakeholders and other partners	R1	R2	R3
difficult to hire appropriate staff for the pilot?							
What percentage of pilot-related activities were assigned to existing staff? What were their pilot-related responsibilities? How did those responsibilities differ for the treatment and control groups? What kinds of qualifications did you require for these positions? Were these staff able to provide the time needed for pilot activities? What percentage of their time was allocated to the pilot? Were there any challenges in using existing staff?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Did you use any volunteers to staff the pilot? Why was this decision made? If used, did the volunteers provide the needed skills and consistency for the positions?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
What lessons have you learned about the staffing needs for these types of programs?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Planning							
Please describe the planning process, including the types of activities that occurred during this phase.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
Which organizations or staff were involved in the planning process? What were the roles of each organization? Did partner organizations lead different planning activities? Why? Who oversaw the planning across all organizations?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
What mechanisms were used during the planning process (for example, work groups, steering committees, or focus groups)?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
How did individuals and organizations communicate during the planning phase (telephone calls, in-person meetings, email, and so on)? How frequently did communication occur?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
What was the time line for planning activities? When did planning activities occur? Are planning activities still occurring? If so, what is occurring and why?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
Were the planning processes perceived as effective by your organization and other stakeholders? What worked well during the planning process?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
What challenges were encountered during the planning process? Did the pilot encounter any delays? What strategies were used to address these challenges? What would you change about the planning process if you could?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
What were the most critical decisions in the planning of the pilot? Why were these decisions critical? Which individuals and organization participated in making these decisions? Were the views of all organizations considered during the decision-making process?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
In your opinion, did some organizations have more influence in the planning process than others? Who had the most influence in the planning process? Who	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		

[illegible]

Topics	Respondent				Round		
	Grantee- or state- level staff	SNAP local office staff	E&T provider staff	Community stakeholders and other partners	R1	R2	R3
into SNAP through assignment to the pilot. If there are additional pathways into the pilot (other than SNAP applications or recertification), describe these as well. Please describe any differences that exist by pilot location or target group.							
<i>SNAP application</i>							
Please describe [STATE's] application process for SNAP benefits.	☐	☐			☐		
Please describe the available methods for applying for SNAP benefits: for example, mail or fax, walk-in, online, CBO, and telephone. How does the process differ for each method?	☐	☐			☐		
Please describe the process for accepting and processing applications. Which staff are involved in the process? How and at which stages? Are interviews generally conducted face to face or by telephone? Are applications generally complete? What is the process for completing applications when information is missing? What type of follow-up is required?	☐	☐			☐		
How are clients notified about determinations and requirements? How long does it generally take to make a determination?	☐	☐			☐		
Do clients generally come into the office for assistance or is most contact by telephone and mail? Does it vary by subpopulations (such as working families, the elderly, ABAWDs, and so on)?	☐	☐			☐		
<i>SNAP recertification</i>							
Please describe the recertification process for SNAP benefits.	☐	☐			☐		
Please describe how clients submit recertification forms: for example, mail and fax, walk-in, online, CBO, and telephone. How does the process differ for each method?	☐	☐			☐		
Please describe the process for accepting and processing recertification forms. Which staff are involved in the process? How and at what stages? Are interviews generally conducted face to face or by telephone? Are recertification forms generally complete? What is the process for completing redeterminations when information is missing? What type of follow-up is required?	☐	☐			☐		
How are clients notified about determinations and requirements? How long does it generally take to make a determination?	☐	☐			☐		
Do clients generally come into the office for assistance or is most contact by telephone or mail? Does it vary by subpopulations (for example, working families, the elderly, ABAWDs, and so on)?	☐	☐			☐		
Are all clients in the household reassessed for SNAP E&T eligibility at each recertification?	☐	☐			☐		
<i>Pathways into the SNAP E&T pilot: New and recertifying SNAP clients</i>							

Topics	Respondent				Round		
	Grantee- or state- level staff	SNAP local office staff	E&T provider staff	Community stakeholders and other partners	R1	R2	R3
Please describe the process for assessing which clients applying or recertifying for SNAP are eligible for the SNAP E&T pilot. How are SNAP E&T eligibility determinations made? Are all clients in the household assessed for eligibility?							
How are exemptions from work registration assessed? Are there any state-specific exemptions from participation in SNAP E&T? If so, what are they? How are clients assessed for these exemptions? If clients are exempt from work registration, are they eligible for the pilot?							
About what percentage of participants are not work registrants? Does the process for these clients differ?							
If SNAP E&T is mandatory, how are clients notified of SNAP E&T requirements? How soon after SNAP determination is made are clients told about SNAP E&T requirements? What are the requirements? How are clients informed of these requirements? Do workers discuss the requirements during the interview? [Collect any documents provided to participants.]							
If SNAP E&T is voluntary, how are clients notified of SNAP E&T services? In what format (for example, verbally or written)? What are clients told? Is there any encouragement to participate? [Collect any documents provided to participants.]							
Beyond determining eligibility, what role does the SNAP eligibility staff play in pilot assessment and services?							
Where are clients told to report for services? How are they notified?							
<i>Pathways into the SNAP E&T pilot: Other pathways</i>							
For SNAP clients who are not newly applying or recertifying, how are you targeting potentially eligible pilot participants? What criteria are used? How are clients notified?							
For those targeting clients at provider sites, how are clients targeted for the pilot? What criteria are used? How are clients notified? If they are not receiving SNAP, what is the process for applying? If they are not eligible for SNAP, what is the process for including them in the pilot?							
<i>Determination of eligibility for the pilot/assignment to pilot</i>							
What criteria are used to determine if a client is eligible for the pilot? Who makes the determination? Please describe the determination process.							
At what point in the client flow are participants randomly assigned to the demonstration?							

Topics	Respondent				Round		
	Grantee- or state- level staff	SNAP local office staff	E&T provider staff	Community stakeholders and other partners	R1	R2	R3
Please describe the random assignment process and procedures. Who conducts the assignment? Where and how is the assignment conducted (for example, at the provider's facility, in person, over the telephone, and so on)? Have these procedures affected the intake flow for regular SNAP E&T participants?							
What information/instruction is provided to the participant after random assignment? (How much information about the evaluation is discussed?) [Collect any documents provided to participants.]							
Did you make any changes to this process over the course of the pilot? If so, why, how, and when?							
Services							
Please describe the process for obtaining SNAP E&T services.							
Where can a participant access SNAP E&T services (for example, SNAP office, DOL/AJC, TANF office, other service provider, and so on)?							
Which staff interact with participants throughout the receipt of SNAP E&T services?							
Are participants assessed before receiving services? Please describe the assessment process. How long is the assessment? In what format is the assessment conducted (test, meetings, group discussions, and so on)? What organization conducts the assessment and which types of staff are involved? What is the result of the assessment (a test score, a training plan, and so on)?							
What types of barriers to employment do participants most often face? What types of barriers do participants face in participating in SNAP E&T services?							
Do participants attend an orientation before enrolling in services? Please describe the orientation and how it might differ for treatment and control groups. Which organizations and staff provide orientation?							
What services and activities are available to participants? (List all that are available, including education and training, financial coaching, life skills, and employment.) How are services assigned? Are some services in higher demand than others? How much input do participants have in determining the services they will receive?							
How do services differ for participants in the treatment group versus the control group?							
What agency or organization delivers each type of service? How do the organizations deliver the service? For those organizations delivering similar services, how if at all do services and service delivery differ?							
Please describe how long each type of services is available to an individual							

Topics	Respondent				Round		
	Grantee- or state- level staff	SNAP local office staff	E&T provider staff	Community stakeholders and other partners	R1	R2	R3
participant. How long to complete.							
Can participants receive multiple services? If so, are they simultaneous or sequential? Who decides?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
On average, for how long do participants receive services, including follow-up services? What is the range? Can participants continue to receive services if they cease to receive SNAP? If so, which types of services and for how long?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
What are the challenges that participants face in engaging in program activities? What are the costs of participation that might make it difficult for them to participate?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
<i>Support services</i>							
What support services are available to assist participants in overcoming barriers to employment and participation? How do support services differ between the treatment and control groups?	☐		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Please describe the value of each type of support service. Are there caps on how much an individual participant can receive for each type of support service? For support services overall? What is the process for approving payments?	☐		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Which organizations provide each type of support service? How are participants referred? How does this differ for participants in the treatment and control groups?	☐		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
What other organizations and/or services are participants commonly referred to for support services?	☐		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Are these referral agencies pilot partners or regularly available community resources? For which referral services does the pilot provide reimbursement? To what extent do case managers follow up on the referral?	☐		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To what extent do any pilot-funded support services provided to participants (for example, for child care or transportation) cover participants' costs for program participation and/or employment?	☐		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Do participants receive any post-training or post-job placement employment retention or advancement services? If so, please describe. For how long?	☐		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
<i>Case management</i>							
Please describe the case management provided to pilot participants. Who provides case management to participants? How does this differ for participants in the control group?	☐		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
What are the requirements and expectations for how often case managers contact participants? How often must they meet in person? By	☐		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

[illegible]

Topics	Respondent				Round		
	Grantee- or state- level staff	SNAP local office staff	E&T provider staff	Community stakeholders and other partners	R1	R2	R3
How many attempts are made to reach a single client? Do you have an estimate of how many contacts a single client receives (on average)? Does the level of outreach differ for those who agree to participate and those who do not? Please describe.							
Were different outreach and recruitment approaches used for different types of households (for example, the homeless or non-English speakers)? For mandatory versus voluntary participants, such as ABAWDs?							
Did you receive any feedback from clients or the community on the recruitment and outreach approaches used? Please describe.							
Beyond what was described above, did you do anything else to try to maximize participation rates among the eligible population? If so, what?							
What kinds of strategies did your organization use to encourage participants to continue to use SNAP E&T services after they enrolled?							
Did strategies change over time? Please describe. Why were the changes needed?							
What worked particularly well related to recruitment and outreach? Which methods appeared to have the best results? Did this differ by pilot location?							
What challenges did the pilot encounter related to recruitment and outreach?							
Partner communication and oversight							
How does the grantee communicate with partners and providers? Who participates? Discuss the types of and reasons for communication.							
How frequently do organizations communicate—at the manager and administrator level and at the line staff level?							
Have there been challenges in maintaining communication? How could communication be improved?							
What forms of communication have been most helpful? In what ways?							
Does the grantee have data sharing agreements (MOUs) in place with each partner and provider? If not, why not? Has that caused any issues in cooperation?							
Please describe the staffing and management plan for the pilot? Which agency or staff lead oversight? How are providers' and partners' activities monitored? How frequently? Are there plans for corrective action, if needed? What are they? Have any been needed?							
Operations and procedures							
Is staff training for the pilot ongoing? If so, what type of training? How are training needs assessed?							
What forms of guidance do case managers receive regarding serving pilot							

[illegible]

[illegible]

Topics	Respondent				Round		
	Grantee- or state- level staff	SNAP local office staff	E&T provider staff	Community stakeholders and other partners	R1	R2	R3
Were there concurrent policy or political changes that might have affected the SNAP E&T program? Please describe.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Were there unique economic factors in STATE that might have affected the SNAP E&T program? Please describe.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
What are the labor market conditions in the pilot area? What are the key industries in the area? What are the sectors with the most current job openings and which are projected to have the most job openings over the next five years?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
What are the demographics of the population targeted by the pilot? What are common barriers to employment for the target population?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Lessons learned and sustainability							
What challenges have you encountered during the implementation of the pilot? How have you worked to overcome them?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Did technical assistance received during the pilot influence the pilot's implementation? If so, please describe. Would additional technical assistance have been helpful? If so, please describe.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
What would you do differently if you could implement the pilot again?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
What efforts were successful during pilot implementation? What worked especially well during pilot implementation?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
What are the three most important lessons you learned while implementing and operating the pilot?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
What conditions would have to be maintained for the program to continue successfully in the future?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
What changes would have to be made to operate the pilot program successfully in the future?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Could this program be continued with the current level of SNAP E&T funding allocated to your state? Could you leverage other funds to continue?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
How difficult would it be to roll out this program to the rest of the SNAP E&T clients you serve?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
What advice would you give other states that want to implement this program?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Notes: ABAWD = able-bodied adult without dependents; AJC = American Job Center; CBO = community-based organization; DOL = U.S. Department of Labor; MIS = management information system; E&T = employment and training; MOU = memorandum of understanding; SNAP = Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program; TANF = Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.

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