

Generic Information Collection Request

Usability Evaluation of Federal Application for School Meals

Request: The U.S. Census Bureau plans to conduct additional research under the generic clearance for questionnaire pretesting research (OMB number 0607-0725). We propose to conduct a usability evaluation for Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) of the online federal prototype application for school meals. We are seeking approval for this project.

Background: The Food and Nutrition Services has developed a new prototype for an online application for parents and guardians to apply for free and reduced price school meals for their children. This prototype application will be available for school districts around the country to use as a template for their own applications if so desired. FNS has requested usability testing of an online federal prototype application to ensure that it is effective and user-friendly.

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to conduct a comprehensive test, which will include both formative and summative testing, to assess usability and to identify usability problems. Usability will be evaluated in terms of respondent's **effectiveness** and **efficiency** in application completion, and **satisfaction** with the experience of interacting with the application. This project is to accomplish the following objectives:

1. Identify usability problems using qualitative data.
2. Collect quantitative measures requested by FNS.

Population of Interest: Persons who have applied for school meal benefits previously OR that may be eligible.

Language: The evaluation will be conducted in English and Spanish.

Timeline: The evaluation will be conducted from April 10th, 2017 to July 24th, 2017.

Project scope: The usability evaluation of the online FNS application website prototype will include formative and summative testing to be carried out as scheduled in Table 1.

Table 1. Estimated Project Schedule

Recruiting	Monday 4/10 - Monday 5/22
Data Collection	Monday 4/17 - Monday 6/12
Data Analysis	Monday 6/12 - Monday 7/10
Report	Monday 7/10 - Monday 7/24

General Protocol: Participants will first be asked to complete a demographics questionnaire and Internet experience questionnaire. Then participants will complete the FNS online prototype application while thinking aloud. After completing the tasks, each participant will be asked to complete a satisfaction questionnaire, and asked debriefing questions.

Sample: A total of 58 individuals who have either applied for school meal benefits previously or who may be eligible will participate in the testing. Of this, 36 participants will be tested in English and the remaining 22 participants will be tested in Spanish.

Recruitment: Participants will be recruited using a combination of word-of-mouth, flyers, online and paper advertisements. Sponsor's assistance may be sought by contacting their sources.

Use of Incentive: Due to the length and complexity of the task as well as the necessity to travel to test locations, we plan to offer an incentive of \$40 to offset the costs of participation, such as travel and parking.

Below is a list of materials to be used in the current study.

1. Study plan including possible test cases (Enclosure 1)
2. Sample testing protocol (Enclosure 2)
3. Demographic questionnaire (Enclosure 3)
4. Internet and mobile experience questionnaire (Enclosure 4)
5. Debriefing questionnaire (Enclosure 5)
6. User interaction satisfaction questionnaire (Enclosure 6)
7. Additional pre-screening questions (Enclosure 7)
8. Paper version of the web questionnaire (Enclosure 8:
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/web-based-prototype/docs/index.html#/>)

Length of interview: We estimate 60 minutes per participant. (Respondents will be screened using the Census Bureau's generic screener and for eligibility to apply for free or reduced-price student meals.) We are expecting to screen about 150 people with the additional one question, estimated at 1 minute per person, to get the 58 participants based on the recruiting from the paper testing (2.5 hours additional screening). Thus, the total estimated participant burden for this request is 60.5 hours or less.

The contact person for questions regarding data collection and statistical aspects of the design of this research is listed below:

Brian Falcone
Center for Survey Measurement
U.S. Census Bureau
Washington, D.C. 20233
(301) 763-4276
brian.falcone@census.gov