

Date: October 23, 2015

To: Ronald Hill, Chase Sackett, and Calvin Johnson

From: Carole Trippe and Brittany McGill

Subject: Draft Parameters Memorandum for ConnectHome Internet Access Survey

This memorandum describes 1) the parameters for compiling the sampling frame selecting the sample for the ConnectHome Internet Access Survey (sections 1 and 2) and 2) a preliminary overview of a survey administration plan (section 3).¹ The purpose of the survey is to conduct a baseline assessment of high-speed Internet access by public housing residents in 28 ConnectHome communities. The baseline assessment data will be collected through a mail survey conducted over an eight-week period between November 2015 and January 2016. Participants will be entered into a lottery to receive prizes in return for participating in the study. The goal of the sample design is to permit an accurate estimate of the percentage of households with access to the Internet across the targeted public housing units in the 28 communities.

1. Sampling Frame Parameters

Target Population. The target population for the Internet Access Survey is public housing units targeted to receive ConnectHome services in 28 communities as of November 1, 2015.

Sampling Frame. The sampling frame for the survey, which will be provided by HUD, will be based on a list of public housing units targeted to receive ConnectHome services in the 28 communities. Targeted populations may include households with children, households with school-age children, particular public housing buildings or developments, or certain areas of the community; all targeted communities will be those overseen, however, by HUD PHAs. Each of the 28 communities will identify their particular targeted population in their "Local Project Plans" due on October 30, 2015 or through other communication with HUD. Once HUD obtains information on a community's target population, HUD staff will extract a list of current public housing units that meet those characteristics based on internal HUD administrative data as of November 1, 2015. HUD will then forward this information to Insight as soon as it becomes available from each community (beginning in early November of 2015).

The unit of analysis for the survey is a public housing unit as opposed to a public housing resident to eliminate duplicate responses from the same unit. However, responses will be requested from the primary householder to elicit the most accurate information regarding Internet service. In order to identify all possible forms of contact information, and to make comparisons between public housing units located in the 28 communities, the following information should be provided on each targeted public housing unit:

¹ This plan will be developed in more detail over the next few weeks.

The sampling procedures as described above are designed so study findings can be used to make statistically defensible inferences about Internet access among the entire population of public housing units targeted for ConnectHome services across the 28 communities. The sample size selected allows us to measure the overall access to the Internet with—at most—a 1.9-percentage-point error rate and a 95-percent confidence level.

Additionally, as sample sizes allow, estimates will also be made of Internet access within each of the 28 communities. Further, comparisons may be made between various subgroups across each of the 28 communities, including units with school-age children, units with elderly members, and units with Hispanic members.

Although the goal of the sampling procedures is to select a random sample of 200 public housing units in each community, some communities may have fewer than 200 targeted units in the sampling frame. For example, among public housing units with children, three communities have fewer than 200 units:⁴

- ▶ Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma (146 units with children)
- ▶ Little Rock, AR (155 units with children)
- ▶ Meriden, CT (90 units with children)

Among the units targeted for ConnectHome services, there may be additional (or different) units with fewer than 200 units. Where there are fewer than the required 200 units in a community, we will select all the public housing units (a census) rather than a sample of units in the community. For example, if the targeted households in Little Rock, AR are public housing units with children (and thus the sampling frame would have only 155 units), we will select all 155 units to receive the survey. If 50 percent of these units respond, then we will only have 77 completed surveys from Little Rock. However, since it will be a census, there is no associated sampling error. We will know the number of communities (if any) with fewer than 200 units in the sampling frame once the targeted households are defined by each community and identified by HUD.

Assignment of Insight ID to Selected Units. Insight will assign a six-digit Insight identifier (ID) to each selected public housing unit. The first two digits will identify the community (i.e., 01 – 28) and the following four digits will be a random four-digit number (from 0001 – 5600) which creates a unique six-digit ID for each unit. The six-digit ID will be used to track completed surveys, ensure against duplicate surveys, identify additional information about the households responding to the survey, identify households to be entered into the lottery and identify nonrespondents for follow-up.

Response rates. Our goal for the Internet Access Survey is to achieve an overall response rate of 50 percent. As mentioned previously, this relatively high response rate for a mail survey may only be feasible if it includes follow-up with a second mailing to nonrespondents, and additional in-person (or telephone) follow-up. Other factors specific to the planned data collection methodology that may help reach this response rate include: 1) the questionnaire is relatively short (5 minutes or less); 2) the questionnaire asks for factual information (e.g., do you have Internet connection) that is not controversial or particularly sensitive; 3) respondents will be offered the opportunity to be entered into a lottery for prizes such as computer devices or gift cards; and 4) the survey addresses a subject matter that is likely to be important and relevant to respondents. Finally, outreach efforts to encourage

⁴ This is based on the aggregate information on characteristics of public housing units provided by HUD in the background documents recently shared with Insight.

Insight's forthcoming Survey Administration Plan will outline in more detail the plan for administering the Internet Access Survey, including following up with nonrespondents and encouraging high response rates while minimizing bias.