

Appendix B-1-1. Recruitment Letter to Regional Office

[On FNS letterhead and come from the Child Nutrition liaison for the project]

OMB Number: 0584-XXXX
Expiration Date: XX/XX/XXXX

[DATE]

Dear [contact name]:

As you know, strengthening the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is a key goal of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). Under the Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Act (IPERA) of 2010 (Public Law 111-204), the USDA is required to identify and reduce erroneous payments in CACFP.

The Office of Policy Support (OPS) at FNS has hired a contractor, Manhattan Strategy Group (MSG), to conduct a feasibility study to determine a valid and reliable method of assessing errors in CACFP meal claims at Family Day Care Homes (FDCHs). Led by a project team at MSG since October 2014, this feasibility study focuses on designing, developing, and testing a data collection method that allows FNS to estimate erroneous payments associated with improper meal claims. The project team at MSG has designed two digital data collection platforms and web-based alternatives for use in the feasibility study: a smartphone application for providers and a text message cell phone application for parents. The applications provide a simple means for FDCHs to report meal serving times, and for parents to report child attendance.

MSG is preparing to conduct a full-scale feasibility study to collect the data necessary to determine improper payments at FDCHs. The study requires that MSG contact State CACFP agencies, sponsors, FDCHs, and parents to invite participants to join the feasibility study. MSG has identified a purposive sample of two States, selected in partnership with OPS, for the research study. Within these two States, we will select a sample of 15 sponsors from each State, 20 providers per sponsor, and approximately five parents per provider to achieve the required precision estimates.

The feasibility study follows a two-group experimental design to collect data during a 3-month period. Sampled sponsors and providers will be assigned to control and treatment groups. MSG will collect preliminary administrative data in November 2016, and implement the data collection platforms in the sampled sponsors, FDCHs, and parents in March 2017. During the data collection period, participating providers and parents will use the data collection systems as instructed. Participation in the feasibility study is voluntary but strongly encouraged for sponsors and FDCHs per Section 305 of the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010. Parent participation is voluntary.

At this time, I want to: (1) inform you that MSG will conduct the feasibility study in [STATES IN THE FNSRO] and (2) request your assistance in obtaining a point of contact for each of the State agencies with oversight for CACFP in [STATES IN THE FNSRO]. Once we've obtained

Feasibility of Estimating Meal Claim Errors
for Family Day Care Homes in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

this information, MSG will begin the feasibility study by contacting State agencies and inviting sponsors (and then FDCHs and parents) to join the research study.

We want to receive the State CACFP agency contact information by [DATE] in order to maintain the project's schedule for development. You can forward the contact information for [STATES IN THE FNSRO] to me directly at Ron.Maynard@fns.usda.gov and to the project manager, Dr. Ying Zhang, at yzhang@manhattanstrategy.com.

I sincerely appreciate your support for this important feasibility study and assistance to USDA/FNS in complying with IPERA 2010. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,