

Attachment 4: Community Leaders Interview Letter

Letter of Invitation to be interviewed for research project: "*Participatory mapping to identify and support at-risk populations in emergency preparedness*"

Date:

Dear _____,

This letter is an invitation to request your participation in our research study titled "*Participatory mapping to identify and support at-risk populations in emergency preparedness*". This is a collaborative project funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, Atlanta) and conducted by the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health (HSPH, Boston) in collaboration with _____ (**local partner for specific state/ county**). This research has been reviewed by HSPH Institutional Review Board.

Our project seeks to engage community leaders who can provide information on local vulnerabilities, potential risks across segments of the population, and available assets in the community. This information will be used to enhance the ability of local practitioners and policy makers to apply effective methods at identifying vulnerable and at-risk populations and increase the ability of these populations to prepare for, withstand, and recover from public health emergencies and disasters.

We invite you to join this participatory research project and request your consent to be interviewed.

Your participation is voluntary. Your participation in this process will entail becoming familiar with our research and participating in a group interview of approximately two hours in length. You are free to skip any questions that you do not feel comfortable answering. With your permission, the group interview will be tape-recorded to facilitate collection of information, and later transcribed for analysis. None of the information will be reported in any way that will permit you to be identified. De-identified interview transcripts will be stored on the principal investigator's and senior manager's encrypted computer to keep the data secure.

If you choose to participate, you may change your mind and leave the study at any time. Refusal to participate or discontinuing your participation will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. We do not anticipate any reasonably foreseeable risks/discomforts to the prospective participants. There are no direct benefits to participating in the study. However, we believe the results of this study will help us improve and develop tools that will reduce the emergency management system burden associated with preparedness efforts and have a concrete impact on the response to public health emergencies.

We look forward to your participation and thank you for your time and kind consideration.

Sincerely,

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