

APPENDIX G.1: REFUSAL CONVERSION - ENGLISH

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

FOOD AND YOUR HOUSEHOLD STUDY REFUSAL CONVERSION STRATEGY AND SCRIPT: ENGLISH

The Telephone Research Center (TRC) will document the verbatim reason for a refusal, and the strength of a refusal in the Non-Interview Report Form. TRC supervisors will review such refusals and assign these cases to experienced telephone interviewers for a second contact attempt. All interviewers will be trained to answer respondents' questions and concerns and establish rapport. Some suggested answers for frequently asked respondent questions follow.

- *What is this SURVEY about?*
This survey is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service. They offer SNAP, formerly known as the Food Stamp program, that is run by your State. Westat, a survey research firm based in Rockville, MD, is conducting the study. We're interested in learning where people shop for groceries, why they buy certain foods, and what effect this has on their diet and health. Your answers will help the USDA improve access to food among SNAP recipients.
- *How long will the interview take?*
The interview will take about 25 minutes. You may decide to stop at any time, or skip any questions you prefer not to answer. Participation is voluntary.
- *What type of questions will you ask me?*
We will ask questions about where you shop for food, how you decide what types of foods to buy and prepare, how you cope when money is tight, and what effect this has on your diet and health.
- *How do I know you will keep this information private?*
Only the research team will see your answers, except as otherwise required by law. Your name will be kept separate from your answers. Your answers will be combined with those from the other participants so that no individual's answers will appear alone in the report.
- *What will be done with the information I provide?*
The information and opinions you share will help us better understand where SNAP participants shop for food and what factors influence the foods they buy. Your answers will be combined with that of all the others who respond to the survey.

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According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this collection is XXXX-XXXX. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 5 minutes per response, including the time to review instructions, searching existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collected.

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- *How will the survey results be used?*
We will use the results to see how SNAP payments can support healthy eating habits
- *Why should I participate?*
. You have been selected at random to represent many other people like you. If you don't participate, important information about people like you will be lost.
- *When and how will I get the \$20?*
After completing the interview, we will send you \$20 cash in the mail. You will receive the \$20 within 2 weeks of completing the survey.
- *Why did you send me \$5?*
This is our gift to you, to thank you in advance for your consideration for doing the survey. You are free to keep that money, even if you do not complete the survey.
- *Who do you work for?*
I work for Westat, a survey research firm in Rockville, Maryland.
- *How do I know this is a legitimate survey?*
This study is being conducted for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition. You can call my supervisor at [XXX-XXX-XXX] to verify the legitimacy of the survey.
- *What is SNAP?*
SNAP, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, is a government assistance program to help low-income households pay for food. In your state SNAP is called as [Fill in local name, e.g., CalFresh]. SNAP used to be called the Food Stamp program.
- *How did you get my (unlisted/cell phone) number?*
Your contact information was provided by the agency that oversees SNAP recipients in your state.
- *Who can I contact at the USDA?*

Rosemarie Downer
SNAP Research and Analysis Division
Office of Policy Support
Food and Nutrition Service, US Department of Agriculture

Email address: Rosemarie.Downer@fns.usda.gov

Phone number: 703-305-2129

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Fax number: 703-305-2576

Mailing Address:
3101 Park Center Drive
Alexandria, VA 22302

THIS SECTION WILL NOT BE TRANSLATED INTO SPANISH

Handling Respondent Refusals

In any survey, there are always some respondents who refuse outright to be interviewed and some who indirectly indicate that they will not participate. Identifying why a person may decline to participate if they do not express it explicitly will help the interviewer gain the respondent's cooperation. Respondents typically refuse or are hesitant to participate for the following reasons:

- Fear of Survey, the Interviewer, Use of the Data

Respondents tend to fear things they don't understand. By having the purpose of the study and what the data will be used for clearly in mind, the interviewer can alleviate the respondent's fears. Some respondents may think an interviewer is trying to sell them something. For any such situations, the telephone interviewers can provide him/her with the supervisor's telephone number, and suggest s/he call to verify the authenticity of the study and the legitimacy of the organization.

- Perceived Invasion of Privacy

It is possible that a respondent is willing to participate in the survey but tells the interviewer that s/he is unwilling to discuss certain subject areas. If this should happen and the respondent is adamant about answering questions dealing with certain subject areas, the interviewer should explain to the respondent that he or she is required to ask every question because they are very important but that if s/he feels very strongly about not answering certain items s/he may refuse when the question is asked.

- Hostility Towards the Sponsor

If the respondent is hostile toward government funded surveys or the USDA, the interviewer should reiterate the general purpose of the survey. The interviewer should tell the respondent that his/her views and experiences may get overlooked if/she decides not to participate in the survey.

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It is always helpful to preface a rebuttal to a respondent's objection with a token agreement or understanding of his/her viewpoint, e.g., "I can understand that," or "You certainly have a right to feel that way." That takes the respondent off the defensive and usually works as well as a more detailed rebuttal.

- Cost in Time and Energy

The length of the interview, may also affect the respondent's participation. Should the interviewer make contact at an inconvenient hour, or if the respondent becomes annoyed as a result of this contact, the interviewer should quickly and apologetically back off and attempt to make contact at a time more convenient for the respondent. It is always a good strategy for the interviewer to reiterate that he or she knows that the respondent has a busy life; we appreciate his/her time and would really like the respondent to participate in this important study.