

OMB# 1850-0870 v.6

Appendix E  
Updated April 2017

PIAAC 2017 National Supplement  
Contact Letters and Brochure

These same letters were used for the PIAAC 2014 National Supplement, and were modified only to update the letter signatory to Peggy G. Carr, Acting Commissioner, and to remove the documents related to the recruitment of the prison sample, which is not included in the PIAAC 2017 National Supplement.

## **Letters and Contact Scripts for PIAAC 2017 National Supplement**

The materials described below are for use during the efforts of recruiting and contacting households and sampled participants in these households. These parties include the household respondent, the sampled participants as well as gatekeepers in locked buildings who may block an interviewer's entry to a building with sampled addresses. Each document is described below along with a description of the target recipient.

The PIAAC household sample letters are:

1. Initial Contact Letter – This letter is sent to all sampled households at the start of data collection to notify the residents (a) that their household has been sampled for the PIAAC 2017 National Supplement and (b) that an interviewer will be visiting their house in the near future. The letter provides information about the study as well as a telephone number and the study website, if the recipient wants more information. Interviewers also carry copies of this letter with them and will give another copy of the letter to the screener respondent if he or she does not remember receiving the letter in the mail.
2. Household Refusal Letter – Locked Building – This letter is sent to sampled households if the household resides within a locked building or community and the interviewer is unable to enter the building or community when attempting to contact the sampled household for screening.
3. Household Refusal Letter – No Selling – This letter is sent to sampled households who will not open the door when initially approached by interviewer because they are suspicious about the reason for the interviewer's visit.
4. Household Refusal Letter – Refusal After Initial Contact – This letter is sent to sampled households who refuse to participate when initially approached by interviewer.
5. Household Refusal Letter – Too Busy – This letter is sent to sampled households who refuse to participate when initially approached by interviewer because they are too busy.
6. PIAAC Brochure Text (Household Sample) – This brochure is given to the sampled respondent and serves as the informed consent for the study.

## Initial Contact Letter

### NCES letterhead with PIAAC logo

[date]

Dear Sir or Madam:

Your household has been selected to participate in the **Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies** being conducted by the **United States Department of Education**. This study will provide information about the education, work experiences, and skills of adults in this country and around the world.

Since we cannot conduct an interview in every household in this country, we use scientific methods to randomly select addresses throughout the United States. Your household has been selected to represent thousands of others similar to yours in the United States.

In the next few weeks, one of our field representatives will visit your home. She or he will show you photo identification issued by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and ask some short, simple questions about you and other household members to see who qualifies to participate. In most households, only one person will be selected for the study. **The selected person will receive \$50 after completing the study.** Your household participation is entirely voluntary; however, we ask you to give serious consideration to the importance of this study.

The National Center for Education Statistics is authorized to conduct this study under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543). All of the information you provide may only be used for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S.C. §9573 and 6 U.S.C. §151). Individuals are never identified in any reports. All reported statistics refer to the U.S. as a whole or to national subgroups.

If you have additional questions, our field representative will be glad to answer them. You may also call the study's toll free number (1-855-286-9240) or visit the study's website at <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/isas/>.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration. Your participation is a service to our country.

Sincerely,

Peggy G. Carr

Acting Commissioner  
National Center of Education Statistics

## Household Refusal Letter - Locked Building

### NCES letterhead with PIAAC logo

[date]

Dear Sir or Madam:

Recently your household should have received a letter like this one, from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), explaining that it has been selected to participate in an important international study called the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies. We sent one of our field representatives to contact your household, but without success.

This study is designed to tell us what skills adults in the United States have and how those skills relate to their employment and education. This information will help us develop educational and training programs to prepare our workforce to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Since we cannot conduct an interview in every household in this country, we use scientific methods to randomly select addresses throughout the United States, and your household has been selected. Please help us determine if anyone in your household qualifies to participate in the study. If an adult in the household is selected to participate and **completes the study, that person will receive \$50.00 as a thank you**. Participation is entirely voluntary and is a service to the community and the nation.

Please take a moment and call our study's toll free number (1-855-286-9240-) to arrange a time to meet with our field representative.

The National Center for Education Statistics is authorized to conduct this study under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543). All of the information you provide may only be used for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S.C. §9573 and 6 U.S.C. §151). Individuals are never identified in any reports. All reported statistics refer to the U.S. as a whole or to national subgroups.

Thank you very much for your cooperation and your contribution to this important study.

Sincerely,

Peggy G. Carr  
Acting Commissioner

National Center of Education Statistics

Enclosure

## Household Refusal Letter - No Selling

### NCES letterhead with PIAAC logo

[date]

Dear Sir or Madam,

Recently a field representative contacted your household on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), explaining that your household has been selected to participate in an important international study called the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies. It is understandable that you may have suspicions these days when a stranger knocks on the door. Therefore, as the Commissioner of the National Center of Education Statistics, I want to assure you that this is a legitimate nationwide study conducted by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics. We are NOT advertising or selling anything, and at no time will we attempt to collect money from you.

This study is designed to tell us what skills adults in the United States have and how those skills relate to their employment and education. This information will help us develop educational and training programs to prepare our workforce to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Since we cannot conduct an interview in every household in this country, we use scientific methods to randomly select addresses throughout the United States. Your household has been selected to represent thousands others similar to yours across the country. Please help us determine if anyone in your household qualifies to participate in the study. If an adult in the household is selected to participate and **completes the study, that person will receive \$50.00 as a thank you.**

Our field representative will contact your household again shortly to schedule a time to meet with you. Our field representative will be wearing a photo ID badge, will provide you with a brochure describing the study, and can address any concerns or questions you may have. Please help us to complete this study. If you still have questions, please call our toll free number (1-855-286-9240)). Your participation is entirely voluntary and is a service to your community and the nation.

The National Center for Education Statistics is authorized to conduct this study under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543). All of the information you provide may only be used for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S.C. §9573 and 6 U.S.C. §151). Individuals are never identified in any reports. All reported statistics refer to the U.S. as a whole or to national subgroups.

Thank you very much for your cooperation and your contribution to this important study.

Sincerely,

Peggy G. Carr  
Acting Commissioner  
National Center of Education Statistics

Enclosure

## Household Refusal Letter - Refusal After Initial Contact

### NCES letterhead with PIAAC logo

[date]

Dear [RESPONDENT NAME, SIR OR MADAM],

Recently one of our field representatives contacted you about representing the United States in the international study called Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies, which is being conducted by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics. You were reluctant to begin the study, so I am writing to give you more information and ask for your help.

This study is designed to tell us what skills adults in the United States have and how those skills relate to their employment and education. This information will help us develop educational and training programs to prepare our workforce to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Contacting every adult in the United States is very expensive and difficult. Therefore, we have used statistical methods to randomly select several thousand adults who can represent the entire nation. If you do not participate, adults like you across the country will not be accurately represented in this study.

I understand that you are very busy and that time can be hard to come by. Your participation is entirely voluntary. But I would not ask you for your time if it were not so important to include every selected adult in the study. **If you complete the study, you will receive \$50.00 as a thank you for your time and participation.**

The National Center for Education Statistics is authorized to conduct this study under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543). All of the information you provide may only be used for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S.C. §9573 and 6 U.S.C. §151). Individuals are never identified in any reports. All reported statistics refer to the U.S. as a whole or to national subgroups.

If you have additional questions, our field representative will be glad to answer them. You may also call the study's toll free number (1-855-286-9240), or visit the study's website at <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/isas/>.

Thank you very much for your cooperation and your contribution to this important study.

Sincerely,

Peggy G. Carr  
Acting Commissioner  
National Center of Education Statistics

## Household Refusal Letter - Too Busy

### NCES letterhead with PIAAC logo

[date]

Dear [RESPONDENT NAME],

Recently a field representative contacted you on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics, explaining that you have been selected to represent the United States in an important international study called the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies. At that time you were unable to begin the study. I am writing now to tell you a little more about why this study is important and why we have contacted you.

This study is designed to tell us what skills adults in the United States have and how those skills relate to their employment and education. This information will help us develop educational and training programs to prepare our workforce to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Your participation is important because you represent thousands of other individuals who are like you across the country. Contacting every adult in the United States is very expensive and difficult. Therefore, we have used statistical methods to randomly select several thousand adults who can represent the entire nation. I understand that you are very busy and that time can be hard to come by. But please see if you can make time for this study because if you do not participate, adults like you who have busy lives will not be accurately represented in this study.

I have taken the liberty of asking our field representative to contact you again shortly to schedule a time to meet with you. Your participation is entirely voluntary and is a service to your community and the nation. **If you complete the study, you will receive \$50.00 as a thank you for your time and participation.**

The National Center for Education Statistics is authorized to conduct this study under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543). All of the information you provide may only be used for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S.C. §9573 and 6 U.S.C. §151). Individuals are never identified in any reports. All reported statistics refer to the U.S. as a whole or to national subgroups.

Thank you very much for your cooperation and your contribution to this important study.

Sincerely,

Peggy G. Carr  
Acting Commissioner  
National Center of Education Statistics

## **PIAAC Brochure Text**

### **What is the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies?**

It is an international study designed to measure a range of skills among the adult population in the more than 30 countries that are participating worldwide. Specifically, this study looks at adults' reading and math skills as well as how they use computers and the Internet in their daily lives to locate information and solve problems. This study also collects information from participants about their background, work, and educational experiences.

In the United States, the National Center for Education Statistics, a part of U.S. Department of Education, is conducting this international study.

### **Why is this study important?**

The results of this study will provide a snapshot of U.S. adults' skills and help us as a country develop the educational and training programs to help prepare our workforce to meet the challenges of the 21st century. For example, this study is the first national study in the United States to give us an accurate picture of how often and how effectively U.S. adults use computers in their work and daily lives. Such information is important for policymakers, educators, and researchers trying to develop educational and training policies and programs to improve adults' skills in the United States.

### **How was I chosen?**

Contacting every adult in the United States is very expensive and difficult. Thus, the National Center for Education Statistics uses statistical methods to randomly select several thousand individual adults who can represent the entire nation.

### **What will I be asked to do?**

You will be asked to respond to a questionnaire read to you by a field representative who comes to your home. The questionnaire asks you about your education, work experiences, use of computers, and other information. After the questionnaire, you will be asked to complete a series of tasks that represent common everyday activities, such as figuring out the expiration date on a food product, using a map to give directions, following instructions on a prescription label, using a bus schedule, or interpreting a chart in a newspaper article. You will be asked to complete these tasks with a computer or with paper and pencil.

### **How much time will it take?**

The study takes around two hours to complete.

## **Why should I participate?**

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary and is a service to your community and the nation. You represent thousands of other adults throughout the country. And, because of the statistical methods used to select you, we cannot substitute anyone else for you if you do not participate. If you do participate, you will help us get an accurate picture of the variety and range of adult skills in the United States. In addition, you will receive \$50.00 as a thank you for completing the study.

## **I haven't been in school in years, and I don't work. I don't think I can help.**

Yes, you can! The success of this study depends on having an accurate representation of U.S. adults between the ages of 16 and 74. Thus, we need information from:

- adults who are retired or work at home; as well as those currently in the workforce or looking for work;
- adults who attended school many years ago; as well as those currently in school, and
- adults who went to school for only a few years; as well as those who have gone to school for many years.

## **I don't use a computer in my day-to-day life. I don't think I can participate in this study.**

Yes, you can! Not everyone uses a computer in his or her daily life. One of the purposes of this study is to find out how often people actually use computers. If you do not use a computer on a regular basis or are not comfortable using one, you can receive a printed version of the tasks.

## **How do I know my answers will be kept confidential?**

The National Center for Education Statistics is authorized to conduct this study under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543). All of the information you provide may only be used for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S.C. §9573 and 6 U.S.C. §151). Individuals are never identified in any reports. All reported statistics refer to the U.S. as a whole or to national subgroups. In addition, everyone working on the study has signed a confidentiality agreement pledging to protect the information provided by respondents. As soon as the survey is completed, all personal information that links data to respondents is removed.

## **How will I recognize the field representative?**

The field representative who contacts you will be carrying a study photo identification issued by the National Center for Education Statistics.

**What if I have more questions?**

The field representative who visits your home will be able to answer questions you may have about this study. You may also call the study toll-free number or visit the study web site below.

[study toll-free phone number]:1-855-286-9240

[study website]: <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/isas/>

Thank you in advance for participating in this important study.