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## E.6 - Follow-Up Interviews with Stores without Scanning Technologies that Meet the Federal Requirement: Interview Guide

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### Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview for the SNAP EBT Scanner Study. This project is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service to better understand how the new requirement to install scanners at check out to accept SNAP benefits will affect you and your business. By collecting this information, we can better understand and help minimize the burden of this requirement on you and other small business owners.

This interview will take about 20 to 30 minutes and will include questions about the type of technology used in your store at checkout for SNAP and other sales; suggestions or concerns you have related to buying, installing, and using scanners at checkout to identify which items are eligible to be purchased with SNAP benefits; and information you have or would like to have about scanning technologies.

Your participation in the interview is voluntary, and the information you provide will not have any impact on your authorization to accept SNAP benefits. At the end of the interview, I will send [or give] you a \$20 Visa gift card. Please answer the questions to the best of your ability. You can decline to answer questions if you don't have the information or if you prefer not to respond. Your responses will be kept private, and any reports prepared with the information you share will not include your name or the name of your business. Your information will not be shared with anyone outside this research team, except as otherwise required by law. With your agreement, I would like to record the interview to ensure I capture the information you share accurately.

Do you have any questions about the interview or use of the information before we begin?

Do you consent to proceed with the interview and to have it recorded?

### Interview Questions

**1. First, I would like to hear about the type of cash register or point-of-sale system you use. Please describe the system you use including any capability to scan items at check out.**

Probes:

- a. How long have you had this system?
- b. Did you choose this system or was it chosen by someone else, for example, the previous owner or a supplier?
- c. *[If respondent chose system]* Why did you choose this system?
- d. Does this system have all the features you want or would you like to have this system do some things it currently does not do? *[If applicable]* What else would you like to have?
- e. What types of information about sales can you get from your system?

- f. Is there information you would like to have that you can't get from this system? *[If yes]* What information would you like to have?
- g. *[If not clear from description of system and responses to follow-up questions]* Is this system used for redeeming SNAP benefits? *[If no]* How do you redeem SNAP benefits?

**2. As I explained when we started the interview, there is a new law that will require SNAP retailers to use scanners to identify SNAP-eligible items. Are you currently considering installing scanning technology [or updating your system]?**

Probes, if yes:

- a. To what extent does this new federal requirement influence your decision about acquiring [or updating your] scanning technology?
- b. Are there other reasons you are considering implementing [or updating your] scanning technology? *[If yes]* What are those?
- c. Have you considered types of available scanning technologies? *[If yes]* What scanning technologies are you considering and why?

Probes, if no:

- a. What are the reasons you aren't considering installing scanning technology [or updating your scanning technology] now? *[If not mentioned, ask about infrastructure issues, personnel training or capacity issues, disruption of business or perception of scanning system or technology "hassles"]?*
- b. Do you think you will consider installing scanning technology [or updating your scanning technology] in the future to meet this requirement? Why or why not?
- c. How much impact would there be on your business in terms of sales volume if you are no longer authorized for SNAP?

**3. Where do you get information about point-of-sale technology, including scanning technologies?**

Probes:

- a. *[If not mentioned]* Do you get information from vendors or retailer associations?
- b. Have you received information about costs for installing and operating [or updating your] scanning technology? *[If yes]* Where did you get the cost information?
- c. *[If store has no scanning capability]* What, if anything, have you heard about the benefits of using scanning technology? Do you think these benefits would be true for your business? *[If not mentioned, ask about increased sales, quality control, improved inventory control.]*
- d. *[If store has scanning capability]* What benefits, if any, have you experienced with your scanning technology? *[If not mentioned, probe: quality control, improved inventory control, increased sales, faster checkout time, improved customer service.]*
- e. What, if anything, have you heard about [or experienced with] disruptions or problems with installing and using scanning technology? *[If store has no scanning capability]* Do you think these problems would occur in your business?
- f. What other information would you like to have about scanning technologies? What's the best way to get information to you? *[If not mentioned, ask about technical information about scanning technologies; cost information for implementation, maintenance, and operation; information regarding setting up; information regarding training.]*

**4. Next, I have some questions about possible costs for installing [or updating] scanning technology to identify SNAP-eligible items.**

If response to Question 2 indicates currently considering, or has considered and decided against, installing or updating their register system to include scanning technology:

- a. Based on what you've learned, how much do you estimate it will cost to implement [or update the] scanning technology in your store?
- b. What costs are included in your estimate, for example, hardware and software purchase or lease, setup and installation costs, store renovations?
- c. *[If not already included in description of estimate]* What, if any, costs might you incur for alterations or renovations if you install [or update your] scanning technology, for example, changes to checkout spaces or electrical wiring?
- d. *[If not already included in description of estimate]* What, if any, other costs do you anticipate incurring when implementing [or updating your] technology, for example, costs to train store personnel on maintaining or using scanning technology?
- e. What amount could you afford for implementing [or updating your] scanning technology?
- f. Do you have an estimate for the ongoing costs for operating and maintaining scanning technology? *[If yes]* What is the estimate and what is included?
- g. *[If store has no scanning capability]* What amount could you afford monthly or annually for operating and maintaining scanning technology?
- h. Do you know of any sources of funding to help your business with the costs of installing [or updating your] scanning technology? *[If yes]* What are these sources? *[If not mentioned as a source of funding]* Would a loan be an option if you needed help with the costs to install [or update your] scanning technology?

If response to Question 2 indicates NOT currently considering installing or updating their register system to include scanning technology:

- a. Do you have an idea of how much it would cost to implement [or update] scanning technology in your store? *[If yes]* What do you estimate it would cost?
- b. *[If a cost estimate is provided for item a]* What costs are included in your estimate, for example, technology purchase or lease, installation costs, and ongoing maintenance costs?
- c. Would you anticipate incurring other costs like store renovations or training for store personnel to maintain and operate the scanning technology? *[If yes]* Please describe these other costs.
- d. What amount could you afford to implement [or update your] scanning technology?
- e. *[If store has no scanning capability]* What amount could you afford monthly or annually for operating and maintaining the scanning technology?
- f. If you decided to install [or update your] scanning technology, do you know of any sources of funding to help your business cover the cost? *[If yes]* What are these sources? *[If not mentioned as a source of funding]* Would a loan be an option if you needed help with the costs to install [or update your] scanning technology?

**5. Overall, what are the most important factors or concerns you have related to installing [or updating your] scanning technology? Why are those most important?**

That concludes the interview questions. Would you like to share any other information regarding scanning technologies?

Thank you very much for your time and for the information you shared.