

## **Appendix C**

### **BIAS NG Staff Survey**

Welcome to the Monroe County Staff Survey for the Behavioral Interventions to Advance Self-Sufficiency Next Generation (BIAS-NG) project! An independent research team wants to hear your thoughts about the interventions mailed and texted to clients as part of the project, and about your casework with clients.

#### **Informed Consent: Staff Survey**

You are invited to participate in a short survey for the Behavioral Interventions to Advance Self-Sufficiency Next Generation (BIAS-NG) project.

#### **What is the study?**

MDRC, a nonprofit social policy research organization, and its partner MEF Associates, are conducting this project under contract to the Administration for Children and Families within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Its goal is to use behavioral science, which incorporates ideas from psychology and economics, to improve communication with and attendance for individuals who receive services from the Monroe County Department of Social Services (MCDSS). We have developed revised outreach materials for the Employment Assessment and Work Experience Program. We have also developed some text messages for clients to remind them about appointments.

#### **What will I need to do?**

We are surveying staff who have interacted with clients who received our interventions to provide their thoughts and experiences with the revised outreach materials and text messages.. The survey will take up to 15 minutes. It focuses on your thoughts and experiences, and provides an opportunity to get your feedback on how you and the clients on your caseload interacted with the interventions.

#### **What are the risks and benefits of participating in this survey?**

There are no significant risks to your participation. Participating in the survey will not benefit you directly, although your responses may help improve the experiences of individuals involved with DSS. We have very strong security measures in place and will make every effort to protect your privacy. There is a small possibility of someone outside of the study staff seeing your survey responses.

#### **Will you share information from the survey?**

Only the study team will see the survey responses. Your name will not be listed in any published reports, and comments will not be attributed to you. Your answers will be kept private to the extent permissible by law.

**Do I have to do the survey?**

Your participation in the survey is voluntary and you do not have to answer any questions you do not want to complete. Whether or not you choose to participate will not be shared with anyone.

**Questions:**

If you have questions about the study, you can call the project director, Peter Baird at MDRC at 212-340-8834.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13), an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB number for this collection is 0970-0502 and the expiration date is 08/31/2020.

## 1. Background

How long have you worked with DSS in Monroe County?

\_\_\_ Years

## 2. General perceptions of the intervention

To what extent were you aware of the new BIAS-NG reminder letters for Employment Assessment and Work Experience Program appointments, which were tested starting in September 2018?

- A lot
- A little
- Not at all

*[Only asked if respondent replied “A lot” or “a little” to the previous question.]* Overall, how would you rate the usefulness of the new BIAS-NG reminder letters for Employment Assessment and Work Experience Program appointments in helping clients who received these reminders to show up for the meetings?

- Excellent
- Above average
- Average
- Below average
- Poor
- Don't Know

To what extent were you aware of the BIAS-NG appointment reminder text messages introduced in 2018?

- A lot
- A little
- Not at all

*[Only asked if respondent replied “A lot” or “a little” to the previous question.]* Overall, how would you rate the usefulness of the new appointment reminder text messages in helping clients to show up for meetings?

- Excellent
- Above average
- Average
- Below average
- Poor
- Don't Know

Generally speaking, how do the new BIAS-NG letters, magnet, and text messages compare to the previous way of doing things?

- Much better

- A little better
- About the same
- A little worse
- Much worse
- Don't know

How would you describe staff satisfaction and morale since the County implemented the new BIAS-NG letters, magnet, and text messages?

- Much better
- A little better
- About the same
- A little worse
- Much worse
- Don't know/not applicable

*[If the respondent indicated they were not aware of either intervention, they would skip to Section 3.]*

How would you rate the fit between the agency goals and the new BIAS-NG letters, magnet, and text messages?

- Excellent
- Good
- Average
- Fair
- Poor
- Don't know

In the last three months, were you aware of interacting with a client who received the new letters, magnet, and text messages? If Yes, how often?

- Every day or almost every day
- 3 or 4 times per week
- 1 or 2 times per week
- Every other week
- Once a month
- Less than once a month
- Not at all
- Not sure

In the last three months, how often have you interacted with a case on your caseload that did NOT receive the intervention materials?

- Every day or almost every day
- 3 or 4 times per week
- 1 or 2 times per week
- Every other week
- Once a month

- Less than once a month
- Not at all
- Not sure

To what extent do you think clients who received new letters, magnet, and text messages were more prepared for the necessary meetings and work requirements than those who did not receive the new letters, magnet, and text messages?

- Much better
- A little better
- About the same
- A little worse
- Much worse

### 3. TANF Client Outcomes

*Imagine that a client similar to current clients does not show up for a scheduled visit or meeting.*

Q1. *As a caseworker, how often does the scenario described happen to you?*

- [1 = rarely/never, 2 = sometimes, 3 = often, 4 = very often]

Q2. *There may be many reasons why a client similar to those on your caseload would not be present, and several possibilities are listed below. Based on your own experience, tell us how much you agree with each of the following statements as a reason why clients do not appear?*

*[5 point Agreement scale; order randomized]:*

- The client is avoiding contact assuming the message will be negative (for example, they fear benefit sanctions).
- The client forgot about the appointment.
- The client faces multiple challenges and cannot prioritize this particular case-related action.
- The client lacks the motivation to participate.
- The client does not understand what is involved to participate in the visit or meeting due to lack of literacy.
- The client is unavailable due to a lack of childcare or necessary transportation.
- In my last interaction with the client, the client left the meeting confused.
- I didn't give the client enough time during the last interaction for them to fully understand the next steps involved.
- The last time I interacted with the client, I shared bad news.
- I didn't give the client enough advanced notice for scheduling.
- Other\_\_\_\_\_
- Other\_\_\_\_\_

## OPTIONAL MODULE

### 4. Case Perceptions

Instructions: *Below are some statements about your experiences as a caseworker. Consider each of the following questions about you and your current work situation. Please select the number that reflects how frequently a particular statement is true about yourself or your situation.*

*(1 = rarely/never, 2 = sometimes, 3 = often, 4 = very often)*

*[Order below randomized]:*

- I believe I can make a difference through my work.
- In my job, people can pretty much accomplish what they set out to accomplish.
- I am able to do my job well if I make the effort.
- Problems with the bureaucracy (red-tape, unnecessary tasks) hinder my ability to succeed as a caseworker.
- I feel like the worth of my efforts is minimal because I'm "bogged down" by the system.
- I feel like the worth of my efforts is minimal because my clients are stuck in the cycle of poverty.
- I prevent my own personal values and opinions from intruding into my work with clients.
- If a case goes better than expected, it influences the way I think about my full caseload/other clients.
- If one of my cases experiences a setback, I think about whether something similar will happen in my other cases.
- When a case goes very poorly, it really sticks in my mind.
- I can tell whether a new case will end up working out, right from the start.
- I can tell whether I will be able to help a new client, right from the start.
- I believe that I am in control of the success of my case.
- I have a sense of hopelessness associated with working with those I help.
- I have a sense of disillusionment associated with my role as a caseworker.
- When a case doesn't work out, it's because "the system"/ bureaucracy is broken.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

### 5. What else would you like us to know?

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*Thank you for your time! All survey responses are private and will help improve the intervention and services for your clients.*