

Attachment F: Accompanying Communications for Site Visit Focus Group Guide

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Email from Abt to TANF Case Managers Requesting Assistance in Recruiting Participants

Month Date, 2019

Dear [FILL NAME]:

I would like to ask for your assistance in recruiting participants for a focus group regarding [Name of TANF program]. The Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is conducting small group discussions with families currently experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness to learn about their use of TANF services. Abt Associates and MEF Associates are conducting this research on behalf of OPRE.

The purpose of the study is to understand the nature of TANF approaches being used across the country to identify, assess, and serve and support families experiencing or at-risk of homelessness. It also will document the approaches and strategies currently used by TANF agencies to serve these families.

As part of the study, we would like to conduct a focus group with up to 10 TANF recipients in your program. The information gathered during this focus group will help us make improvements to the program so that agencies can learn how to better support families experiencing homelessness. The focus group is expected to take 60-90 minutes.

In the next few weeks, a member of our team will contact you by phone to provide additional details about the study, and introduce the process for nominating clients to be part of the focus group. At the conclusion of the group discussion, we will give participants \$25 for their participation. Participation is voluntary.

Any information that respondents provide during the focus group will remain private; their answers will never be linked with their name or any other information that could identify them. All identifying information will be kept private. Abt Associates and MEF Associates will not share a respondent's personal information with anyone without their approval.

If you have any questions, please call Abt Associates toll-free number at 1-800-XXX-XXXX or [Name of Agency Point of Contact] at XXX-XXX-XXXX. Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Lauren Dunton
Project Director

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 valid OMB control number for this collection is xxxx-xxxx which expires xx/xx/xxxx.

Consent Form

How TANF Agencies Support Families Experiencing Homelessness

Thank you for agreeing to participate in today's discussion. Your participation is very important to this study. Abt Associates and MEF Associates, two research firms, are conducting a study for the Administration for Children and Families within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to understand the TANF services offered to families experiencing and at-risk of homelessness. As part of that study, we working with *[insert local TANF program name]* and programs like this around the country to understand how TANF programs are serving and supporting these families.

This discussion will last about 90 minutes. We will ask you about your experience accessing TANF and housing assistance services. During the discussion, please use only your first name.

Your participation is voluntary and involves no significant risks to you. Whether or not you participate will not have an effect on benefits you receive from *[insert local program name]*, or any other organizations. You can choose not to answer any of the questions. You may leave the focus group at any time. As a thank you for your participation in this focus group, you will receive a \$25 gift card at the end of the session.

We will take notes and audio record the focus group. The electronic notes and audio recording will be stored on a secure server. Only members of the research team will see the notes or hear the recording. The notes and recording will be destroyed at the end of this project. We will not share any information about you with anyone outside the research team, and we will ask all participants to not discuss or share anything they have heard after leaving the focus group. However, there is always a risk that other people in the group may reveal what was discussed in the focus group, or people outside the research team will see or hear the information you provide. Your name or any other identifying information will not appear in any reports from the study. However, we would like to be able to quote you using a fake name. If you agree to allow us to quote you in publications without using your name, please initial the statement at the bottom of this form.

You may ask any questions about the research at any time. If you have questions about the research, you may contact the project director, Lauren Dunton at Abt Associates at 301-634-1779.

If you are not satisfied with the response of the research team, have more questions, or want to talk with someone about your rights as a research participant, you may contact Abt Associates' Institutional Review Board toll-free at 877-520-6835.

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