

ACS English Testing Protocol Guide: [Paper / CAI Mode] [Group 1 / Group 2 / Group 3] [Question Version 1 / Question Version 2]

Participant ID #: |_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|

Interview Date: |_|_|_|/|_|_|_|/|_|_|_|_|_|_| (mm/dd/yyyy)

Start Time: |_|_|_| : |_|_|_| AM / PM

Interviewer: _____

Location (Check One): TBD TBD TBD TBD Etc.

Flashcards: Yes No Not Applicable (paper mode)

Screening Criteria Fulfilled:

1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
 4. _____
 5. _____
-

SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

READ OR PARAPHRASE THE INTRODUCTION.

Hello, I'm [NAME] with [RTI / RSS], a survey research company, and I am talking to you on behalf of the U.S. Census Bureau. Thanks for agreeing to help us today. Let me tell you a little about what we will be doing:

We are conducting a study on the questions in the American Community Survey, a survey that is conducted by the Census Bureau. The American Community Survey helps local officials, community leaders, and businesses understand the changes taking place in their communities. It is an important source of detailed population and housing information about our nation. This survey asks questions about your household, including yourself and other people in the household. It's important that the questions make sense, are easy to answer, and that everyone understands the questions in the same way.

If you agree to take part in this study, I will [IF PAPER MODE: hand you a questionnaire to answer. IF CAI MODE: ask you questions from the American Community Survey]. I will ask you to answer the questions as you would at home. After that, I will ask you some additional questions, such as what those questions meant to you and how you reached your answer.

Sometimes I will ask you a follow up question that may sound a little strange. For example, I might ask you what a certain word means to you. The reason for this is to learn about the process you go through in your mind when you answer the questions. There are no right or wrong answers. We are interviewing people from all over the country to help find the words and questions that will work best for everyone.

Your participation in this interview is very important because it will help the Census Bureau improve the American Community Survey. You will receive \$40 and I will ask you to sign a receipt to document that you have received the money.

SECTION II: CONSENT

Before we start, I'm going to give you a written consent form that we'll go over together. Please feel free to ask any questions you may have as we go through the form. This document explains the following:

- With your permission, I would like to audio-record our conversation. This will allow me to concentrate on what you are saying instead of taking a lot of notes while you are talking. It will also help me write a summary of the interview.
- All your responses and everything you say will be kept strictly confidential, and only researchers working on this project will see your answers or hear the recording. Your name will not be used in any of our reports.
- Your participation is voluntary, and you may stop at any time. You may choose not to answer any questions you don't want to answer.
- The interview should take about 1 hour.
- The form also has the contact name and telephone number of the project director, should you have any additional questions about the study. It also contains information about how to get in touch with the Institutional Review Board representative if you have any questions about your rights as a research participant in this study.

[IF OBSERVER IS PRESENT: I also wanted to let you know that this interview is being observed by [IF CENSUS OBSERVER: someone who works on the American Community Survey] [IF RTI/RSS OBSERVER: someone else who works on this study]. They are observing the interview because they are also interested in learning how the questions work, and whether we need to change something that does not work.]

This form contains all of the things I just told you about, including your rights in this interview. Please read over the form and ask me questions if there is anything you don't understand. If you are willing to take part in the study, please sign and date both sections of the form.

INTERVIEWER:

1. DID THE PARTICIPANT HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS?

- Yes
 No → (SKIP TO QUESTION 3)

2. PLEASE SPECIFY:

3. HAS THE PARTICIPANT READ AND SIGNED THE INFORMED CONSENT?

- Yes
 No → **(END INTERVIEW)**

4. GIVE RESPONDENT AN UNSIGNED COPY OF THE CONSENT FORM: Here is a copy of this form for you to keep.

SECTION III: COGNITIVE INTERVIEWING

IF CONSENT WAS GIVEN, START AUDIO RECORDER. COLLECT VERBAL CONSENT FOR RECORDING.

Now, if you're ready, I'd like to get started. [IF PAPER MODE: This is the type of survey that you would receive in the mail, and you would complete it on your own at home.] [IF CAI MODE: This is the type of survey where an interviewer would [IF FLASHCARDS: visit you at home] [IF NO FLASHCARDS: call you on the phone and ask you the survey questions.]] Try to imagine that you are in your home while you are answering these questions.

This is NOT a test, and there are no right or wrong answers. We are reviewing these questions with as many different kinds of people as possible to see how different people interpret the questions. After you answer some of the survey questions, I will ask you questions about your thought process and opinions on certain words and questions.

Do you have any questions about the process before we begin?

[IF PAPER MODE: Please begin completing the survey as if you were at home.] [IF CAI MODE: Now I am going to ask you the survey questions as if I [IF FLASHCARDS: were an interviewer who had come to your home] [IF NO FLASHCARDS: called you on the phone.]] During the interview, feel free to reference or look up any information you have access to if you think you would do that when completing the survey at home. [IF PAPER MODE: I'll stop you at various points to discuss some of the questions you answered.] [IF CAI MODE: I'll stop at various points along the way to discuss the questions with you.] Remember, I am interested in how these questions work for you, so there are no right or wrong answers.

SELECTION TEXT (ADMINISTER AFTER RESPONDENT HAS ANSWERED THE BASIC PERSON SECTION):

IF 4 OR FEWER HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS (INCLUDING RESPONDENT) ARE REPORTED, RESPONDENT WILL CONTINUE ANSWERING THE SURVEY QUESTIONS.

IF 5 OR MORE HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS (INCLUDING RESPONDENT) ARE REPORTED:

Thank you. If this were the real American Community Survey, you would answer the next questions about all household members. However, in order to make sure we end this interview on time, please answer the remaining questions only about yourself and the following people:

- o First priority: [FILL CHARACTERISTIC, E.G., HOMESCHOOLED CHILD]. Selected HH member: INTERVIEWER WILL LIST PERSON
- o Second priority: [FILL CHARACTERISTIC, E.G., HOMESCHOOLED CHILD]. Selected HH member: INTERVIEWER WILL LIST PERSON
- o Third priority: [FILL CHARACTERISTIC, E.G., HOMESCHOOLED CHILD]. Selected HH member: INTERVIEWER WILL LIST PERSON

IF RESPONDENT TAKES TOO LONG ANSWERING QUESTIONS ABOUT THE SELECTED HH MEMBERS, ASK THEM TO ANSWER CERTAIN TOPICS ONLY FOR FEWER HH MEMBERS. IF NEEDED, SAY: In order to make sure we end this interview on time, we are going to move to the next part of the interview.

[QUESTION-SPECIFIC PROBES WILL BE LISTED HERE.]

Overall, what did you think of the survey?

Aside from those issues we already discussed, are there any questions from the survey that you think people might find difficult to answer?

Do you have any other comments or concerns about the survey?

After hearing all of my questions, do you have any questions for me?

Those are all the questions I have for you. Thank you so much!

PROVIDE \$40 AND ASK PARTICIPANT TO SIGN RECEIPT. (KEEP SIGNED COPY.)

STOP RECORDING.

End Time: |_|_| : |_|_| AM / PM