

Appendix F. Introductory Telephone Call With State MCS Staff and Administrators Protocol

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*Modernizing Channels of Communication
With SNAP Participants*

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Modernizing Channels of Communication With SNAP Participants: Introductory Telephone Call With State MCS Staff and Administrators Protocol

PURPOSE: During this call, the study team will confirm the components and functions of each State's MCS with the State SNAP agency, confirm the stakeholders involved in the MCS implementation process, and discuss next steps (e.g., contacting local SNAP agencies, reaching out to other partner organizations). The call will be video-enabled so State staff can provide a demonstration of the MCS. Interviewees will be sent a copy of the conceptual framework and the updated State profile prior to the interview. This will be a 60-minute interview.

As you know from our previous correspondence with you, we are conducting a research study to better understand States' use of mobile communication. We have done some initial research to get a preliminary understanding of your State's mobile communication strategies (MCS). For the purposes of this study, MCS include text messaging, mobile applications participants can download on a smartphone or tablet, and websites that are optimized for viewing on mobile devices. These findings will help FNS and States improve communication with clients and identify best practices that lead to improved program outcomes. The information we have reviewed so far has been collected from publicly available reports such as the SNAP State Options Report and your State's public-facing website [IF APPLICABLE: as well as the SNAP Process and Improvement Grant information]. Over the course of the study, the FNS research team plan to conduct two interviews with key staff involved in the MCS implementation: this phone call and an in-person interview with you and other colleagues involved in MCS implementation during the site visit..

During today's discussion, we would like to review what we've found to ensure we have an accurate understanding preparation for the site visit. In the following interview, which we will conduct in person, we will cover the impact of MCS on State operations, experience working with community partners, lessons learned and best practices from MCS implementation, and an in-depth overview of the functional components of the MCS. The information we gather today will help us meet with stakeholders whose experiences fully represent the planning and implementation process of your State's MCS.

As a reminder, your participation is completely voluntary (not required) and will not affect your job in any way. If you chose not to participate or chose not to answer any questions, you will not be affected in any way. The time required to complete this interview is estimated to average 1 hour.
Would it be ok if I record our discussion?

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A. Recap Background on State's MCS

1. Please start by telling me about your role and any responsibilities related to the MCS.

Probe: How long have you been in this role?

First, I want to make sure we have an accurate understanding of the components and functions of the MCS in place in your State. [REFERENCE STATE-SPECIFIC SUMMARY OF PROGRAM AND SERVICES]

2. Does this sound accurate?

B. History and MCS Implementation Rollout

1. What were the primary funding sources for MCS in your State?

Probe: What in-kind resources or staff time did you devote toward this effort?

2. What was the goal or motivation for launching mobile communication?

Probe: Decreasing cost, increasing access, reducing wait times, going paperless, responding to funding opportunity?

Probe: Who led the initiative? Was there a champion?

C. Functional Components of Each MCS

I want to learn a bit more about the specific MCS functions that are available in your State. As a reminder, this depiction of your State's MCS is based on information available from public sources. Our preliminary review was last updated in [INSERT DATE].

[REFERENCE STATE-SPECIFIC JOURNEY MAP HIGHLIGHTING AVAILABLE FUNCTIONS]

1. Can you confirm that this list of available functions is accurate?

Probe: Is anything missing?

2. How has your State's MCS evolved?

Probe: Has the list of functions available to participants changed throughout the testing period or implementation period? Did you decide to add or change any components or functions? What were the motivating factors?

3. [STATE PROVIDES VIRTUAL DEMONSTRATION OF MCS FUNCTIONS]

D. Involvement of Community Partners

1. Were third-party vendors or other community partners involved? If so, how?

Probe: What were their roles?

2. [IF APPLICABLE] We hope to interview two to three key partners that were/are a part of the MCS development, promotion, and/or testing process in your State. Are there any individuals or organizations you would recommend?

Probe: Would you be willing to connect us with those organizations prior to the site visit?

E. Evaluation and Monitoring

1. Have you or any other stakeholders collected data or metrics about MCS usage?

Probe: Describe the data collection efforts (e.g., when, how often, from whom data are collected).

2. What were your main takeaways?
 - a. What actions have resulted from these takeaways?
 - b. What has been your progress toward meeting your original program goals?
3. Can you share any reports or metrics with us in advance of our site visit?

F. Wrap-Up and Next Steps

1. When we come to your State for our site visit, we'll have more time to talk with you and your colleagues about more of the details, challenges, and lessons learned. Is there anything else you think I should know as we prepare and plan for our visit?
 - a. Are there specific individuals you think we should plan to talk with when we come to visit?
2. As you know, we are also interested in visiting a local office and working with its staff to recruit and plan for our focus groups. Is there a particular office that could support us and may be a good fit for this study?