

## APPENDIX C-1. PRE-TEST INTERVIEW PROTOCOL



OMB Control Number: 0584-XXXX  
Expiration Date: XX/XX/20XX

### Introduction

Good morning/afternoon. Thank you again for taking the time to talk with me today. My name is [INTERVIEWER NAME] and I work for [Westat/Insight Policy Research], a private research company in the Washington, DC-area.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) hired us to conduct a research study to better understand how States and organizations operate and monitor the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). Part of this study includes [telephone interviews/surveys] with States, SFSP sponsors, and SFSP sites to better understand the program and how it is monitored. Before we conduct these [interviews/surveys] on a broader scale, it helps to test the questions to be sure they are easy to understand and to answer.

I'd like to go through the [survey/interview guide] questions with you one-by-one, and have you respond to the questions as if we were conducting a real telephone interview. That will give me a sense of the time it takes to do the interview, and how easy or difficult the questions are to answer. After that, I'll ask you some questions at the end to get your overall reaction to the questions in the [interview guide/survey].

### Informed Consent

Before we get started there are a few things I should mention.

- This is a research study which means your participation in this discussion is voluntary. Refusal to participate will not have any impact on your position or programs.
- The thoughts and opinions that you share during our discussion will be used only to revise our [interview guide/survey]. They will not be used as an evaluation of your work, your staff's work, or the SFSP.
- We may include your name in our report to FNS to indicate that we spoke with you to get your feedback on the [interview guide/survey], but your name will not be linked with any of your responses.

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is conducting this study to obtain information about the administration and oversight of the Summer Food Service Program and to identify potential barriers to ensuring the integrity and effective management of the program. Participation in this study is voluntary and the information collected will be used to determine resources, develop training, and provide technical assistance. Under the Privacy Act of 1974 and the System of Record Notice FNS-8 USDA/FNS Studies and Reports, any personally identifying information obtained will be kept private to the extent provided by law. According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0584-XXXX. The time required to provide this information collection is estimated to average 90 minutes per response for States and sponsors or 60 minutes per response for the sites. This includes the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather and maintain

- Once we start the interview, you can take a break, skip questions, or stop participating at any time without penalty.
- Finally, with your permission, I would like to record this discussion. The recording helps us recall exactly what was said when we go to summarize our findings. The recordings and any notes we have will be stored on Westat's secure server and will be destroyed after the project is complete.

We have planned for this discussion to last [NUMBER] minutes. Do you have any questions before we start? [ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS]

Do I have your consent to participate?

May I turn on the audio recorder now?

**IF YES:** [ADMINISTER SURVEY/ INTERVIEW]

**IF DECLINE RECORDING:** Alright. Would you be comfortable continuing if I only take notes, but do not audio record?

- If yes: [ADMINISTER SURVEY/INTERVIEW]
- If no: I understand, thank you for your time. [END INTERVIEW]

**Procedures**

NOTE START TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

NOTE END TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer Notes:

- Note delivery, comprehension and response issues.
- Note any verbal reaction respondent shares for follow-up during the debrief.
- For any non-verbal reactions (e.g., long pauses), ask only, "tell me what you're thinking here." Do not probe beyond that until the debrief.

General Questions for Interviewers:

- Do respondents understand and interpret the questions as intended?
- What response options should be added to/omitted from the survey questions?
- Are sponsors able to answer in-depth questions about SFSP?
- Are sites able to answer in-depth questions about SFSP?
- Do any questions need to be simplified (put in plainer speech) for sponsors or sites?
- Does the time it takes to conduct the interview match the time estimates in the 60-day FRN burden table?

**Debriefing Questions**

[Interviewers: Use relevant probes below to discuss observed issues from interview notes. Ask about the issues in the order they occurred. Repeat question text to reorient respondent.]

Clarification Requests

You asked [FILL] for question XX. Can you say more about what you were thinking there?

Hesitation

Can you say more about your hesitation at question XX?

Confusion

What was it about question XX that seemed confusing to you?

IF NEEDED, In your own words, what information would you say [CONFUSING TEXT] is asking for?

Answer Changes

What made you decide to change your answer at question XX?

If respondent said question did not apply

For question XX you said it did not apply. Can you say more about that?

If respondent could not answer

For question XX, you said you couldn't answer. Can you say more about that?

Time to complete estimate, any questions that were hard to answer, feedback on general flow, how easy/difficult will it be for States to pull the counts we ask for (# staff, # meal disallowances, # sponsors terminated, etc.)

**Wrap Up**

Is there anything else from your earlier review of the questions that we have not talked about today?

Which questions did you think were hardest to answer? What makes you say that?

Which questions did you think were easiest to answer? What makes you say that?

Is there anything we haven't discussed that you would like to mention?

Thank you for your time.

STOP RECORDING.