

Attachment E.2 Initial Email to States

This information is being collected to assist the Food and Nutrition Service in better identifying and understanding how States define and measure customer service for SNAP applicants and participants. This is a voluntary collection and FNS will use the information to better understand current efforts to strengthen customer service practices in SNAP. This collection does not request any personally identifiable information under the Privacy Act of 1974. 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 complete this information collection is estimated to average 0.20 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Policy Support, 1320 Braddock Place, 5th Floor, Alexandria, VA 22306 ATTN: PRA (0584-xxxx). Do not return the completed form to this address.

Dear [STATE CONTACT],

I am writing to invite [name of State SNAP agency] to participate in the Understanding States' Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Customer Service Strategies study, an important research study to identify and better understand States' SNAP customer service approaches. Social Policy Research Associates (SPR) and its partner, Mathematica, are conducting the study under a contract with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). [State] is one of nine States that are being asked to participate. A description of the study and a letter of support from FNS are attached to this email.

The study has three major objectives. The first is to describe how States define and measure customer service for SNAP applicants and participants, particularly those that go beyond the minimum requirements set by FNS. The second is to describe how States implement and refine their customer service approach. The third objective is to identify proven practices in improving customer service from other government programs and private industry, and to discuss their applicability to SNAP. Ultimately, the study team will write a report that combines findings from across these three objectives to provide actionable recommendations to FNS that support future SNAP customer service guidance. It will include short case studies of each selected State and as well as recommendations to help FNS and State agencies analyze, monitor, and improve SNAP customer service initiatives and processes.

To meet these objectives, the study team will conduct a two-day visit to each selected State to talk with SNAP administrators, frontline staff, and an ombudsperson, advocate, or outreach partner staff member who can share the perspectives of SNAP applicants and participants without burdening those individuals themselves. Discussions will cover SNAP customer service policies, training, technology, and partnerships. During the visits, the study team will also observe a local office or call center and conduct deskside observations with three to four eligibility workers.

We would like to schedule a brief call (lasting 30 minutes or so) to describe the study in more detail, answer any immediate questions you may have, and discuss your potential participation. Please let me know which of the following days and times work best for this initial call:

[RECRUITER TO LIST SEVERAL DAYS/TIMES THAT WORK FOR THEM, INCLUDING THE TIME ZONE]

Thank you in advance for your consideration. We look forward to talking with you and hope you will participate in this very important study. If you would like to reach out to me sooner, please feel free to contact me at [phone number] or via email.

Sincerely,

[Staff name]