

K.4. Case study call script

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Script for telephone call with State SNAP Agencies regarding case study participation

I. Introductions

Hello. This is [NAME] at Mathematica. I'm the [TITLE] for the How Have SNAP State Agencies Shifted Operations in the Aftermath of COVID-19? study. My colleague [NAME] is also on the line. S/he is the Study's [TITLE]. Who do we have on the phone call from [STATE]?

STATE MAKES INTRODUCTIONS.

Thank you for your time today. The purpose of this call is to discuss your State's participation in a case study virtual site visit for the How Have SNAP State Agencies Shifted Operations in the Aftermath of COVID-19? study. We will provide you with an overview of the study, describe the activities involved in virtual site visit participation, and answer any questions you have.

II. Brief description of SNAP COVID Study

Mathematica is conducting the How Have SNAP State Agencies Shifted Operations in the Aftermath of COVID-19? study on behalf of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). This study aims to comprehensively portray how State SNAP agencies responded to the pandemic.

This study will document and describe how State SNAP agencies shifted operations since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, focusing on changes related to the core operations of SNAP application and recertification processes, case management, and benefit issuance. The goal of the study is to deepen understanding of which changes agencies have sustained and why (or why not), the rationale for key policy and operational choices, implementation challenges and successes, and lessons learned for regular SNAP operations going forward and in the event of future disruptions.

You already completed a survey that was sent out to all State SNAP agencies. As you may recall, the "SNAP COVID-19 Survey" collected information related to changes related to staffing, changes in use of technology, decision-making processes for making policy and operational changes, and lessons States learned during COVID-19 public health emergency that could increase preparedness for any future disruptions that affect service delivery. Through this survey of States, we also collected documentation of policy guidance, procedural changes, internal training materials.

To complement the survey, we are conducting in-depth interviews with State and local SNAP agency staff to provide more context for the information provided in the survey and give us insight into the differential effects of changes across a range of geographic areas and populations. After this study overview I'll describe the case studies in more detail.

Do you have any questions at this point?

DISCUSS QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Now I'd like to describe the activities involved in participating in a case study site visit.

III. Case study overview

Broadly, the goal of the case studies is to reveal any nuances in the topics the survey asked about and capture staff perceptions of changes in program operations, challenges associated with these changes, and the rationale behind decisions to continue or discontinue changes implemented during the public health emergency.

To gather information on these topics, in each case study State a team of Mathematica staff will complete a virtual site visit with the State SNAP agency and two local areas. These virtual site visits will provide us with valuable insights that will help further FNS' understanding of these topics. The virtual site visits are not an audit or assessment of the State or local office's operations.

We plan to spend about one day interviewing State-level SNAP staff. Then we will spend about one day interviewing local-level SNAP staff, including administrators, supervisors, and frontline staff at two different local agencies. We expect the virtual site visits to last a total of about two days.

We would also be interested in hearing your recommendations for local offices that might be a good fit based on any information you may have any innovative approaches to adapting to the public health emergency. The Mathematica study team will then work with FNS to make the final determinations as to which local areas to include in the virtual site visit.

The findings from the case studies will be used to generate a report that describes all findings of our analysis, including how State agencies shifted operations during and after the public health emergency, best practices, and lessons learned. We will also synthesize our key findings in two issue briefs for State SNAP agencies and other stakeholders with an interest in SNAP program operations. The information provided in these products could be used by States to support SNAP operations going forward and in the event of future disruptions

Do you have any questions about the activities that will be included in the site visit?

DISCUSS QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Do you have any ideas about local offices that might be a good fit for a site visit?

NOTE SUGGESTIONS AND MOVE ON TO NEXT SECTION.

IV. Site visit scheduling

Let's discuss possible dates for the virtual site visit. Would the week of [FIRST CHOICE DATES] work for you and your staff?

DISCUSS DATES FOR SITE VISIT. IF NEEDED, PROPOSE ALTERNATE DATES THAT WORK FOR THE STUDY TEAM:

[SECOND CHOICE DATES]

[THIRD CHOICE DATES]

IF NONE OF THE PROPOSED DATES WORK FOR THE STATE, ASK:

Is there a week that would work well for you and your staff for a visit?

COMPLETE DISCUSSION OF SITE VISIT TIMING AND NOTE PROPOSED DATES:

V. Open discussion and next steps

After this telephone call I will create a draft schedule and send it to you. We can then work together to confirm the timing of the visit, which local offices will be included, and any other details needed to finalize the schedule.

Do you have any additional questions or comments we should discuss today?

DISCUSS QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS AND RESPONSES.

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me today. I will send a follow up email with the draft schedule soon.

Public Burden Statement

This information is being collected to assist the Food and Nutrition Service in examining how State SNAP agencies shifted operations since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. This is a voluntary data collection and FNS will use the information to describe how State agencies shifted operations during and after the public health emergency and identify best practices and lessons learned. 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 and Expiration Date XX-XX-20XX. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to take 1 hour per response. 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).