

# Instrument 1. Grant recipient staff interview protocol

*This protocol provides a guide for facilitators leading a Diaper Distribution Pilot interview during the implementation assessment site visits.*

*Interviewers need to request participants' permission to audiorecord the interview.*

Interviewers: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Grant Recipient: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

## Introduction

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Hello, thank you again for agreeing to speak with us today. My name is [interviewer] from [Westat or Public Profit], and my colleague is [colleague]. We are part of the team conducting the assessment of the Diaper Distribution Pilot program. The [local diaper program] is a part of this larger Diaper Distribution Pilot program. We have been asked by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) that funds your diaper distribution program to study how the program operates, how it serves families, and what lessons you've learned from implementing the program. We are visiting other diaper programs across the country to learn more about the different approaches to diaper provision and how to meet families' needs. We are not here to evaluate whether you are doing a "good" or "bad" job; we are here to learn more about your program and how your work could be applied to other diaper distribution projects.

We're excited to learn more about your work and experience today to help us get a better understanding of the specific work you do at [local diaper program]. We're going to ask you about—

- How your organization distributes diapers, pull-ups, and diapering supplies
- How your work has changed, if at all, because of conducting the [local diaper program] with federal funding
- What it's like for families to be involved in your [local diaper program]
- Your experience, successes, and challenges in doing this work

## Informed Consent

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As a reminder, your participation in this interview is voluntary, and you can skip answering any question you do not wish to answer. We estimate this interview will take about 90 minutes to complete. We will be taking notes as we go along. With your permission, we would like to audiorecord this conversation. The recording will be used to back up our notetaking and ensure we have fully captured your comments and ideas. We will not share the audiorecording or notes with anyone outside the study team, and we will destroy both at the conclusion of the study.

We will develop a report for the funding agency that summarizes the information you and other program partners share with us. We may use excerpts from your interview in written deliverables, including quotes from what you share with us today. We plan to identify the organizations and job titles of staff participating in these discussions. Although you will not be identified by name, readers may be able to determine your identity through this information. If there is anything you want to share with us but would like it to remain anonymous—for example, shared without your organization name or your title—please let us know, and we will do so. If you prefer to be acknowledged by name, please let us know.

There is no anticipated risk to your participation in this interview. There is also no benefit to your participation; however, we will use the information you provide us to design an assessment of the Diaper Distribution Pilot.

Can we proceed with the interview? Can we start the audiorecording?

Do you have any questions for us before we get started, either about today's interview or about the assessment as a whole?

## Interviewee Background

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Before we start our discussion, it would be helpful to get a sense of your position and background with [organization].

0. What are your job title and responsibilities at [organization]? What are your responsibilities on the [local diaper program]? (*Alternate: What does daily work look like for you on the [local diaper program]?*)
1. How long have you been with the organization? How long have you been working in your current role with the [local diaper program]? (*Alternate: When did you join the organization? Have you had these responsibilities on the diaper program since the start of the program? If not, when did you start working with the diaper program?*)
2. What do you enjoy about working with the diaper program? Have you ever worked with a diaper program before? How does it fit in with your current or original duties? (*Alternate: What brought you to your work*

*with the diaper program? Do you have previous experience with diaper programs or something similar?)*

## Organization Characteristics

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3. What is your organization's role in the [grant recipient and local diaper program]? (*Whom does your organization serve, and what services do you provide?*)
4. What other services or programs does your organization provide beyond distributing diapers and diapering supplies? (*For example, tax assistance, financial planning, SNAP enrollment, child care?*)
  - a. Do you provide referrals for services your organization doesn't directly provide?

## Program Design

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Our first set of questions starts with the planning process because we'd like to understand how your Diaper Distribution Pilot program was designed.

5. [If staff member has been with the diaper program/organization since the beginning of the program] How, if at all, were you involved in the grant development process? For example, identifying staff or partners, researching models for diaper distribution, conceiving your approach, writing the grant proposal, or budgeting the project? (*Alternate: Did you help at all with the brainstorming, planning, or design process?*) [Go to question 5]  
  
[If the staff member joined the program after award] Who was involved in developing the grant approach? (*Is there a staff member you would recommend we speak to about the planning and design process?*) [Skip to question 11]
6. Was your organization distributing diapers prior to this program? If you were, how did that factor in to the design of your current program? (*For example, did the Diaper Distribution Pilot program change your distribution model, eligibility criteria, staff roles, the number of families you can serve?*)
7. How did your organization assess community need for diapers? (*What data did you use to determine how many families needed diaper assistance in the community? Did you conduct a community needs assessment?*)
  - a. [If the organization used data] What datasets did you use, and what data did you examine?

8. How did your organization decide what geographic areas—counties, cities, regions—you would work in? (What factors led to your defining these geographic areas as your service boundaries? How did your organization decide which geographic areas made sense to define as your service boundaries? Probe: *What led you to pick those areas?*)
  - a. [If the organization used data] What datasets or information did you use, and what data did you examine (for example, income data, demographic data)?
9. How many diapers do you provide for each family during each distribution (for example, per month if you do monthly distribution?) How many diapers do you provide for each child during each distribution? How did your organization determine how many families and how many children you could serve with the grant dollars? (Probe for whether families get a set number of diapers, or whether they get additional diapers if they have more than one child in diapers. For example, *You have a finite amount of money from this grant. How did you determine how many families you could distribute diapers to with that money? For example, you could provide a smaller number of families with all the diapers they need for as long as the program runs, or you could provide a small number of diapers to a lot more families for a shorter time period.*)
10. What are the eligibility criteria for participating in the program? How did your organization determine family eligibility criteria? (*How did you decide what families would be eligible to receive diapers? For example, did participants themselves determine whether their household income is low, or did your organization formally verify the family's income compared with the federal poverty income calculations.*)
  - a. Does your program allow families who are not eligible for TANF, WIC, EBT, etc., to receive diapers or supplies if they are in need?
  - b. Does your program include older children (4 years or older) who might still need diapers, pull-ups, and diapering supplies?
  - c. [If they say “yes” to including older children] In general, are there enough diapers and diapering supplies for both younger and older children (4 years or older)?
11. How did your organization select subrecipient and partner organizations to collaborate on [local diaper program]? (Probe: *How did you determine what grant needs you had, like a diaper bank partner, and how did you select partners to fill those needs?*)

- a. Does your organization still have all the partners and subrecipients you named in your proposal for the Diaper Distribution Pilot program—[add list of subrecipients from proposal]. If no, what has changed, and why has it changed?
- 12. How does diaper need affect the families you serve? How does it affect different families differently? How do you think the [local diaper program] can help ease the needs of families?
- 13. What would you say are the overall goals of your current diaper program? Have they changed since the start of the grant?

## Implementation

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Thank you, that's helpful context. Let's shift gears now to the start of your grant to get a sense of the rollout of the work and how it has been going so far.

### Program Startup

- 14. Between the start of your grant and when you first started distributing diapers and diapering supplies to families, what kind of planning did you do? *(For example, finding a purchasing partner to get diapers, putting together a first diaper order?)*
  - a. What went as planned? What didn't? Did you need to make any pivots or adjustments? Tell me about them.
- 15. Tell us a bit about your first purchase of diapers and diapering supplies.
  - a. How and from whom did you purchase diapers and supplies? Is this the purchasing partner you still use, and if not, why?
  - b. What strategies did you use to get the best prices for diapers and diapering supplies? Has anything changed about these strategies since then? *(For example, have you found ways to get better prices for diapers?)*
  - c. How did you determine the sizes and amounts of diapers and supplies to order? How does this compare to your current process? Do you provide larger-sized diapers (particularly pull-ups) for children over the age of 3?
  - d. Where did you store these diapers and diapering supplies? Is this still where you store your diapers, or has the storage location changed?
  - e. How did you inventory these diapers and diapering supplies? Do you still track your inventory this way, and if not, how has your inventory process changed?

- f. How did you get diapers and diapering supplies to the distribution locations? Has this process changed at all as you've continued your program?
- g. How is the transportation working out? Has that changed since the beginning of the program?
- h. Are there any other lessons you have learned related to procuring and storing diapers and diapering supplies?
- i. Do you have any plans to expand or modify your diaper procurement model or logistics in the future?

## General Implementation

- 16. What month did you start serving families? *(When was the first month you distributed diapers and diapering supplies to families?)*
- 17. Do you have more families interested in your program than you can serve? If so, how have you handled this demand? *(For example, creating a waitlist, reducing the number of months or number of diapers and supplies current families can receive, referring families to other diaper distribution programs.)*
  - a. Do you typically serve all children within the enrolled family?
  - b. Do you have more children interested in your program than you can serve? Are they mostly older or younger children?
  - c. If you have a waitlist, how many people are currently on it? How often are you contacting families to move them from the waitlist into the program?
- 18. How do you define program participation—when are families officially “enrolled” in the program? When do you define they are “inactive” in the program? *(Are families enrolled after they receive diapers once? After they sit for a needs assessment or a case management discussion?)*
- 19. How did you plan to distribute diapers and diapering supplies to families (for example, delivery of diapers to participant homes, pickup at food banks, pickup at partner offices)? What methods do you use now, and why? Do different partners use different methods?
- 20. How has diaper distribution been going so far?
  - a. To what extent is implementation going as planned? Have you had to make any pivots, improvements, or adjustments to your original plan? If so, what changes have you made?

- b. How has implementing the [local diaper program] affected your organization? *(What about staff time or engagement of families or caregivers with your organization? Has it brought your organization more visibility or more participants; modernized your approaches? Has it stretched staff too thin, raised participant interest in the program to a level staff can't meet?)*
  - c. *[If being a part of the Diaper Distribution Pilot changed diaper distribution]* How did being part of the Diaper Distribution Pilot change your diaper distribution? *(For example, how many families were you serving previously, and how many families do you serve now?)*
  - d. What's going well? What aspects or elements of your program have helped it succeed? What aspects or factors in your community have helped your diaper program succeed? *(For example, strong existing partnerships with other organizations, a strong community that helped share information by word of mouth?)*
  - e. What challenges have you encountered with distributing diapers to participants? How have you tried to address these challenges?
21. We understand you collect the following data on service delivery (interviewer to add based on documentation, e.g., number of diapers requested by families each month, types of more and less common service referrals, how frequently they use the service). How do you use this information to inform program implementation? *(For example, do you analyze the data to adapt your approach? To plan for the future? To identify families that are dropping out? How do your data lead to adjustments in the program? Do you share any of your information with partners, subrecipients, or the public?)*
22. Is there any information you wish you could have to monitor the [local diaper program]? *(In an ideal world, what data would you want to have to help manage and monitor your diaper program?)*

## Partnerships

23. Now I'd like you to think about the partnerships you built with subrecipients and other organizations during the implementation of the grant. I'm going to use the term partners for simplicity but understand there are distinctions between subrecipients that receive some grant funds and partners that do not. Think about both of these types of partners for most of the following questions, and then we can focus on unpaid partners later. What strategies have helped your partnerships succeed? *(For example, is there anything that helps you coordinate work or determine responsibilities?)*

24. How do you maintain smooth communication and partnership with the other organizations involved in the [local diaper program]? [Probe: How does information flow from your organization as the grant recipient to your subrecipients, and vice versa, as well as between subrecipients?] How do you communicate about [local diaper program] implementation, particularly about how things are going, what your data is saying, and any changes/improvements you collectively need to make? *(How often do you communicate with your partners? What tools do you use to communicate and exchange data?)*
25. What, if anything, has been challenging about working with your partners? What have you done to try to address those challenges? *(Have you encountered any challenges with program partners, like logistic issues, meeting milestones or completing activities, fielding the beneficiary survey, or organizational capacity? What strategies have you tried to address these challenges?)*
- a. Have you experienced any staffing shortages or problems with staff training/capacity with your partner organizations? *(For example, not having enough staff, not being able to find staff, or frequent staff turnover?)*
26. What type of assistance have you provided partners? *(For example, do you help them coordinate with other partners on the project? Provide technical assistance and learning opportunities? Help manage data?)*
27. Do you have any unpaid partners for [local diaper program]? What role do they serve in [local diaper program], and how did they come to be a part of the program?
28. In a moment we're going to turn to some questions about how families experience your program, but is there anything else you'd like us to know about the implementation of the [local diaper program] so far?

## Family Experience and Service Delivery

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Now we're going to discuss what it looks like for a family to participate in your program, from initial outreach and enrollment to receiving diapers and other services. We know your organization may not directly procure or distribute diapers and instead coordinates this process across all your partners [tailor this statement by grant recipient—some do distribute diapers themselves]. You have a bird's eye view of the program, and we want you to think about how families might experience [local diaper program] generally but also differently based on what subrecipient is serving them or where in your state they are located. We'll start at the beginning, thinking about families that need diapers but have not yet found your program.



29. How do families find out about your program? (*What are your outreach and recruitment procedures?*)
- What other methods do you use or have you tried, to raise awareness of the program among families? Were any of them more successful? Less successful?
30. Once families have found the program, what does their first appointment or engagement with the program look like? (*What does their intake look like? Do families walk in or make appointments? Do they meet with staff they know (like their Head Start teacher) or start a new relationship? Can families apply online?*)
- How do you determine if they're eligible to participate, and when is this information conveyed to them? (*If they're completely new to your organization, how do you determine if they are eligible to receive diapers? When do you let them know they are officially eligible to receive diapers?*)
  - How do you handle situations where a family may need emergency or immediate diaper assistance?
  - How do you serve families who speak languages other than English?
31. If a family is found to be ineligible, do you offer them any other supports or services? If so, which supports or services? (*What happens if they aren't eligible to receive diapers from your program? How do they get connected with other supports?*)
32. You mentioned earlier that participants receive diapers and diapering supplies through [diaper distribution methods]. What methods are used by each partner? Which are most common, and which are more unique?
- How often do families receive diapers and diapering supplies, and does this differ by partner?
  - How many diapers and supplies do families receive per child? What happens if families run out of diapers or supplies before the next official distribution?
  - c. Do you distribute full cases of diapers, or do you repackage diapers into smaller amounts? How do you handle open packs of diapers?
  - d. What happens if a family needs a different size of diaper? What if a family needs pull-ups or large sized diapers?
  - e. Have you encountered any challenges distributing diapers and diapering supplies to families? Any successes?

- f. How do you handle feedback or complaints from partners or families about the distribution process? Is there a system in place to address their concerns?

Now we have a few questions for you on connecting families to additional services and what kind of feedback you have received from families.

- 33. Let's say a family enrolls in the program and has received their first distribution of diapers. Our understanding from your proposal is that this family could potentially be connected to [wraparound services from proposal for this program].
  - a. If this family is new to your organization or the subrecipient organization (this is the first program they have enrolled in), how do you determine what additional services the family is interested in and eligible for?
  - b. If this family has already received other support from your organization or the subrecipient organization, do you use this as another opportunity to make more referrals? How do you continue to connect this family to wraparound services?
  - c. How do you make referrals?
- 34. What strategies have you found helpful for retaining families participating in the program? *(For example, do you have a case manager periodically check in with them? What happens if a family misses diaper distribution—does anyone follow up with them, and what does that look like? If you refer them to another service, how do you help them follow through on that referral? Does anyone check or encourage them to attend other support services?)*
- 35. Are there any challenges during this process—from enrollment all the way to maintaining participation—that you or your partners are encountering with serving participating families?
  - a. For example, do you find it difficult to make contact with families for regular diaper distribution?
  - b. [If the program has a limit to the diapers distributed] Sometimes a family may ask for more diapers than your program expects to provide. How often does that occur? How do you handle such situations?
  - c. Have you or your partners encountered any challenges with referring families to services, such as referral partners not following up with families quickly enough, referral partners not having space for new clients or not meeting the families' goals?
- 36. In general, what feedback have you received from families?

- a. What do families like about the program? Are there any stories they have told you about how the Diaper Distribution Pilot program has positively affected their lives?
- b. What challenges or frustrations do families have with the program? Is there any constructive feedback or stories families have told you about how the Diaper Distribution Pilot program could be improved? *(For example, they may wish the program provided more diapers, had more convenient distribution methods, provided diapers more frequently, provided namebrand diapers.)*
- c. Do you think there is greater engagement of families in other programs and services because of the diaper program? *[Do you think families follow through with social support services more often, such as attending a job training program after receiving a referral?]*

## Additional Implementation Support

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We just have a few last questions for you, this time about how the Diaper Distribution Pilot is supporting you, and how it could support grant recipients better in the future.

Can you tell us a bit about any technical assistance you've received? It could be from your program specialist or other staff at the funding agency, their contracted technical assistance provider (i.e., SupplyBank), another partner like the National Diaper Bank Network, or even informal, like another diaper bank or Community Action Agency? *(For example, what was most helpful about the session? What could you use more information on? These sessions could be in person or virtual.)*

- d. What technical assistance information did you find most helpful? Why? *(For example, is there anything you need help or further training on related to the Diaper Distribution Pilot program?)*
37. We know that implementing this program means making some hard choices—you likely cannot serve everyone in your community. What kind of support would you need to serve everyone with diaper need in your geographic area—for example, more funding, more training, more staff, additional partners?
38. What advice or lessons learned would you share with new Diaper Distribution Pilot grant recipients?

## Impact Study

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Part of our team's work is also to design an impact study that would measure the effects of diaper distribution programs on families. Because you are an expert on diaper distribution programs in your area, we have a few questions for you to help

us prepare for this impact study. These questions are not related to the implementation of your program; they are to help us get a sense of what other diaper distribution programs exist in your region and what families participate or do not participate in diaper programs.

39. Does your organization provide any other services to families or caregivers of young children who are not served by the Diaper Distribution Pilot program?
  - a. Can you tell me why they are not involved in the Diaper Distribution Pilot program? *(For example, are they outside the service area for the Diaper Distribution Pilot program?)*
  - b. Are there other community partners that can serve families with diaper need that you are not able to provide with diapers? *(For example, if you can't serve everyone in the region you're covering, is there another organization where families could receive diapers? Are there organizations you could refer families to receive diapers if they're outside the region you work in?)*

## Closing

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40. Before we finish, do you have any advice or suggestions for the funding agency as it considers how to best support diaper distribution programs in the future?
41. Is there anything else you would like to share that I haven't asked about, or anything you would like to elaborate on?

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me today.