

**2025 Food Acquisition and Purchase Survey
(FoodAPS)
Support Desk**

**Inbound and Reminder Call
Tracking**

Telephone Questionnaire Assistance System
Inbound Website FAQs Responses and Reminder
Call Scripts

Scope of Work

Overview

The National Processing Center (NPC) will use the Automated Tracking and Control (ATAC) system to track calls for the Food Acquisition and Purchase Survey (FoodAPS) supported by the FoodAPS Support Desk. This will be the main instrument for displaying case details, logging the results of the call, and presenting the script that the operator will use to respond to questions. The ATAC system will also manage the Inbound & Reminder case workload, provide a training environment, and provide data reporting.

Key Stakeholders & Roles

Associate Directorate for Demographic Programs – Survey Operations / Food Acquisition Team (ADDP-SO)

ADDP-SO is responsible for coordinating between the survey sponsor (United States Department of Agriculture – Economic Research Service and Food and Nutrition Service) and the Logistics and Command Center (LCC). For the FoodAPS Inbound and Reminder operations, the responsibilities of ADDP-SO will also include creating and/or updating required specifications and procedures, scheduling and leading meetings, providing the input, completed cases, and workload files, and training TQA staff. The ADDP-SO Food Acquisitions Team includes the Survey Director, Assistant Survey Director, Instruments Team, Materials Team, and Data Processing Team.

Demographic Survey Coordination Office (DSCO)

DSCO coordinates activities between HQ staff and the National Processing Center (NPC). They act as a liaison and offer a unique perspective on operations across ADDP and how they interact with operations across NPC. DSCO is a branch within ADDP.

National Processing Center (NPC)

The Tucson Contact Center (TCC) is responsible for conducting the Inbound & Reminder Call Operations by receiving phone calls, making phone calls, and providing excellent customer service to respondents. For the FoodAPS telephone operations, the TQA operators will be available to answer incoming calls from respondents to answer or assist with any questions or problems they might have, as well as update any respondent information accordingly if it is inaccurate.

Logistics Command Center (LCC)

The Logistics and Command Center (LCC) assists the teleprocessing duties with the Contact Centers. While physically located at Census Bureau Headquarters, LCC is an NPC branch. For the FoodAPS

telephone operations, LCC will coordinate efforts between HQ staff and the Contact Centers, set up phone lines, schedule training, schedule staffing, monitor production progress and the budget.

Information Technology Support Branch (ITSB)

ITSB is responsible for programming the ATAC system to be used for the Inbound & Reminder Operations and loading the initial workload input file each week (Table 2). ITSB is responsible for loading the Completed Cases files (Table 4) once each day during the Reminder Call Operation to remove completed cases from the workload. ITSB is also responsible for sending files and reports to ADDP-SO during and after the Reminder Operation.

2025 FoodAPS ATAC TQA FAQ Codes and Definitions		
Code	Definition	Response
61	What is the USDA National Food Study?	The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is conducting this study to learn about the food and drinks U.S. households get (whether purchased or received for free), where they get them from, and what food and drinks cost in neighborhoods across the country. The USDA will use this information to design policies and programs to help meet the food needs of households in the United States.
62	Why is my household's participation important?	Your household's participation is vital to the success of the National Household Food Study. Since households are randomly chosen to represent themselves and others in the geographic region, choosing not to participate affects how your data represents you and other households like yours.
63	Is the National Household Food Study voluntary?	Yes. You may stop participating at any time, and there are no penalties for nonparticipation. In most cases, except where the response is required to conduct the study, you may leave the question blank if you do not feel comfortable answering or you do not know the answer.
64	How do I verify a mailing, email, or text message is from the Census Bureau?	If you receive a letter in the mail from the Census Bureau, the envelope contains the following information that will help you verify its legitimacy: U.S. Census Bureau and Department of Commerce logos with Jeffersonville, Indiana as the return address. Email communications from the Census Bureau regarding the National Household Food Study will originate from census.foodstudy@census.gov. Text messages will be sent from (833) 972-2579.

2025 FoodAPS ATAC TQA FAQ Codes and Definitions		
Code	Definition	Response
65	How do I complete this study?	You will complete all parts of the study using an electronic device. Completing the Food Log will be easiest and quickest using a smartphone. Currently, there is not a paper form available to complete and return by mail.
66	What are the different parts of the National Household Food Study and who should answer them?	The Household Survey gathers information from the person in the household who is at least 17 years old and does most of the food shopping or meal planning and preparation. This person will tell us about who lives in the household, their characteristics, and their contact information. This person will also answer health, income, and work questions about themselves and anyone who is younger than 14 in the Household Survey. The Profile & Income Survey asks questions about health, income, and work and should be completed by household members who are at least 14 years old. In the Food Log, all household members who are at least 14 years old report the food and drinks they get, where they get them, and how much they cost. The person who completes the Household Survey will report food and drinks for anyone who is younger than 14 in their own food log. The Closing Survey is the final part of the study, which gathers information about the study experience from the person who completed the Household Survey.
67	How much can be earned for completing all parts of the study?	The person who completes the Household Survey will earn an electronic gift card for \$40 (which includes \$5 for completing their own Profile & Income Survey questions within it), as well as an additional \$15 for completing the Closing Survey. Each household member (or the person who reports on the household member's behalf) will earn \$5 for completing the Profile & Income Survey and at least \$5 per day for completing the Food Log.
68	How and when will I receive the electronic gift card?	Each household member who completes at least one part of the study will receive an email with instructions on how to select and instantly receive an electronic gift card of their choice within one week of the final food log day.
69	Will participation in this study impact any benefits or services members of my household receive?	Gift cards may be reportable as resources under SNAP and income under WIC. For this reason, receiving a gift card may affect your eligibility for these programs. If you have concerns about the gift card impacting eligibility, please contact your local SNAP or WIC agency.

2025 FoodAPS ATAC TQA FAQ Codes and Definitions		
Code	Definition	Response
70	How long does it take to complete the National Household Food Study?	The Household Survey takes about 45 minutes to do and will vary depending on how many people live in the household. Each household member's Profile & Income Survey takes about 15 minutes to do. Each day, reporting food and drinks in the Food Log takes about 15 minutes per household member depending on the food and drinks that people got that day. The Closing Survey takes about 25 minutes to complete.
71	Who authorizes the National Household Food Study?	USDA's Economic Research Service and Food and Nutrition Service sponsor the study (https://www.ers.usda.gov/foodaps). The research community refers to the study as the National Household Food Acquisition and Purchase Survey (FoodAPS), while we refer to the study as the National Household Food Study during data collection. USDA is authorized to conduct the National Household Food Study under Title 7, Section 3171 of the United States Code. The U.S. Census Bureau is acting as the designated data collection agent. Qualtrics is the online reporting tool used to collect survey responses.
72	Will answers remain confidential?	Yes. USDA and the U.S. Census Bureau are legally bound to keep all survey responses confidential. The Census Bureau is required by law to keep your information confidential and can use your responses for statistical purposes only (Title 13, U.S. Code, Section 9). Per the Federal Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2015, your data are protected from cybersecurity risks through screening of the systems that transmit your data. Your National Household Food Study answers are combined with answers from all the other study households and all personally identifiable information about you or your household such as names, addresses, and contact information are removed from the data before it is shared with researchers. The Census Bureau will NOT ask you to provide your personal information via email. The Census Bureau will never ask for your full Social Security number, bank account number, or passwords.
73	Can I return to previous questions to change my answer(s) or add information?	Sometimes. Certain types of questions on related topics are grouped together and you may be able to use the Back button to return to a previously answered question within that group. Once you have moved to the next grouping, you may not be shown the Back button and can only select the Next button to continue. So please make sure what you enter is as accurate as it can be before you press the Next button.

2025 FoodAPS ATAC TQA FAQ Codes and Definitions		
Code	Definition	Response
74	Will my email address and/or phone number be used after the National Household Food Study ends?	No. USDA, the Census Bureau, and Qualtrics (the online reporting tool used to collect survey responses) will not use, share, or sell your contact information, including the email address you use to create a study account, or data that you provide during the National Household Food Study.
75	What do I do if I have trouble logging in to complete a study component?	Please call our telephone operators at 1-844-421-2603 if you forgot your login credentials, have an issue logging in to the Household Survey with the User ID and Password provided to you, or have an issue logging in to the dashboard with your email address and the password you set to complete the Profile & Income Survey, Food Log, or Closing Survey.
76	What resources are available to help me complete the study?	Live operators from the U.S. Census Bureau are available to help answer any questions, 7 days a week from 9:00am-9:00pm local time, at 1-844-421-2603. You may also email census.foodstudy@census.gov for assistance. The participant website (census.gov/help/foodstudy) has training videos that explain how to complete each part of the study. These training videos are also available to access throughout the online study.

REMINDER CALL SCRIPTS

Scripts to Display on Contact/Main Call Screen:

1. Starting the call for household

Display the following in the Answer/Response Screen:

O= Operator

R = Respondent

INTRO

O: Hello, this is <NAME> from the U.S. Census Bureau. You should have recently received an invitation to respond to a survey. Am I speaking with a member of the household that is 17 years of age or older?

R: No

O: Is there someone 17 or older I can speak with?-

R: No adult is available

O: Thank you for your help. I must speak to someone 17 or older to continue. Have a nice day. [end call]

R: Yes – [goto Verify Address]

Verify Address

O: Before we continue, I need to confirm your address. Is your address -
<ADDRESS1><ADDRESS2><CITY> <STATE>

R: Yes – [goto Verify Received Letter]

R: No

O: Thank you for your time. Have a nice day. [end call]

Verify Received Letter

O: Your household should have recently received an invitation to participate in the National Household Food Study. This letter also contains the User ID and password to complete the survey online. Have you received this information?-

R: Yes – [goto Reminder to Participate]

R: No

O: Sorry about that! You should expect to receive an invitation to participate in the National Household Food Study by mail soon. By participating, you will earn a \$40 gift card for completing the first part of the study, and additional gift cards for completing other parts of the study. More information will be available in the invitation letter. Have a nice day! [end call]

Reminder to Participate

O: As a reminder, you will earn a \$40 gift card after completing the first part of the survey and additional money for completing other parts of the study. Do you have any questions regarding the survey?

R: Yes – [Use FAQs to answer questions, then goto Wrap-Up]

R: No – [goto Wrap-Up]

Respondent Questions (FAQs)

Display the following in the Response/Answer screen. Responses for each menu option are listed in Appendix C:

- What is the USDA National Household Food Study?
- Why do you want to know about the foods and drinks my household gets?
- What are the different parts of the National Household Food Study?
- Who should complete the different parts of the National Household Food Study?
- How much money can be earned for completing the study?
- How long does it take to complete the National Household Food Study?
- Who authorizes this study?
- Will answers remain confidential?
- Will Qualtrics use my email address and/or phone number after the National Household Food Study ends?
- Is the National Household Food Study voluntary?
- Why is participation important?
- How do I complete this study?

- o Can I return to previous questions?
- o What resources are available to help me complete the study?

Wrap-Up

O: Thanks for your time. If you need any additional assistance or have any questions regarding the study or your participation, please call our assistance line at 1-844-421-2603. Have a good day.

<Operator ends call and moves onto next call>

Leave a Message

O: Hello, this is <NAME> from the U.S. Census Bureau. Your household has been selected to participate in the National Household Food Study. You should have received a letter in the mail with information on how to log in to the online survey. If you have not yet had time to participate in the survey, please do so as soon as possible. If you have any questions or concerns about the study or have not received the invitation letter, please contact us by calling 1-844-421-2603 or via email at census.foodstudy@census.gov.

2. Starting the call for PR who started but did not submit Initial Interview

Display the following in the Answer/Response Screen:

O=Operator

R = Respondent

INTRO

O: Hello, this is <NAME> from the U.S. Census Bureau. Am I speaking with <RESPONDENT NAME>?

R: No

O: Is <RESPONDENT NAME> available to speak with? [goto Verify Address]

R: No

O: Thank you for your help. Have a nice day. [end call]

R: Yes – [goto Verify Address]

Verify Address

O: Before we continue, I need to confirm your address. Is your address - <ADDRESS1><ADDRESS2><CITY> <STATE>

R: Yes – [goto Survey Complete Reminder]

R: No

O: "Thank you for your time. Have a nice day." [end call]

Survey Complete Reminder

O: I see that you have started but not yet completed the National Household Food Study. I am calling to remind you that you will earn a \$40 gift card for completing the Household Survey portion of the study. Also, upon completion, eligible members of your household will be asked to complete a food diary, where you can earn additional gift cards for each day you enter the food and drinks you purchased or got for free. Do you have any questions about the study that I might be able to help with?

R: Yes - [Use FAQs to answer questions, then goto Wrap-Up]

R: No - [goto Wrap-Up]

Respondent Questions (FAQs)

Display the following in the Response/Answer screen:

- o What is the USDA National Household Food Study?
- o Why do you want to know about the foods and drinks my household gets?
- o What are the different parts of the National Household Food Study?
- o Who should complete the different parts of the National Household Food Study?
- o How much money can be earned for completing the study?
- o How long does it take to complete the National Household Food Study?
- o Who authorizes this study?
- o Will answers remain confidential?
- o Will Qualtrics use my email address and/or phone number after the National Household Food Study ends?
- o Is the National Household Food Study voluntary?
- o Why is participation important?
- o How do I complete this study?
- o Can I return to previous questions?
- o What resources are available to help me complete the study?

Wrap-Up

O: Thanks for your time. If you need any additional assistance or have any questions regarding the study or your participation, please call our assistance line at 1-844-421-2603. Have a good day.

<Operator ends call and moves onto next call>

Leave a Message

O: Hello, this is <NAME> from the U.S. Census Bureau. It looks like you began, but have not completed, the National Household Food Study. As a reminder, you will earn a \$40 gift card by completing the Household Survey portion of the study. Upon completion, eligible members of your household will be asked to complete a food diary, where you can earn additional gift cards for each day you enter the food and drinks you purchased or got for free. Your participation helps the United States Department of Agriculture collect information on food and drinks that U.S. households get, where they get them from, and what food and drinks cost in the neighborhoods across the country. Please remember to complete and submit your survey online. If you have any questions or concerns about the study or have not received the invitation letter, please contact us by calling 1-844-421-2603 or via email at census.foodstudy@census.gov.