

Appendix C. Email to Point of Contact to Schedule Planning Call and Guide for Planning Call

Email to Point of Contact to Schedule Planning Call

TO: [Point of Contact]
FROM: [_____]]
CC: [_____]]

SUBJECT: Invitation to participate in an ACF Study on Child Care and Early Education Supply-Building and Sustainability

Dear [Point of Contact],

We are contacting you about the case study your agency will be participating in as part of a project called “[Understanding Supply-Building and Sustainability Efforts of the Child Care and Early Education Market](#).” The Urban Institute is conducting this study for the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) within the Administration for Children and Families (ACF). As part of this project, we are conducting case studies with a select number of Lead Agencies to learn more about strategies they use to build and sustain the supply of child care and early education programs. In your state, we will be focusing the case study on [STRATEGY].

[INSERT NAME AND ROLE OF REFERRING INDIVIDUAL] indicated that you can help our team plan for the virtual case study. Please let us know your availability for a 30-minute meeting where we can provide an overview of the project and the case study, and we can discuss the individuals who we want to invite to participate in an interview or engage in a focus group. During the call, we will also discuss potential timing for the data collection activities, and the process for scheduling interviews and focus groups. The attached project overview provides additional information about the project and case studies. The attached table lists the data collection activities, including the topics we will discuss, the roles of the individuals we want to interview, and the length of each activity.

Please let us know by [DATE] if you are available during the following times:
[INSERT DATES/TIMES FOR CALL]

If not, please feel free to suggest another date or time.

We look forward to speaking with you soon! Thank you in advance for your help!

Sincerely,
[NAME]

This information collection is voluntary. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB number and expiration date for the described collection are OMB #0970-0356, Exp: 1/31/2027. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: Urban Institute, 500 L'Enfant Plaza SW, Washington, DC 20037.

Reminder Email to Point of Contact to Schedule Planning Call

TO: [Point of Contact]
FROM: [_____]]
CC: [_____]]

[Sent as a reply to initial email message.]

SUBJECT: RE: Invitation to participate in an ACF Study on Child Care and Early Education Supply-Building and Sustainability

Dear [Point of Contact],

I'm following up on the request below to participate in a planning meeting to discuss the case study of [STRATEGY] for a project called "Understanding Supply-Building and Sustainability Efforts of the Child Care and Early Education Market" funded by the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) within the Administration for Children and Families (ACF).

Please reply to this email by [DATE] to let me know when you are available to meet and discuss plans for the case study. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,
[Name]

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Guide for Planning Call

Thank you for agreeing to speak with us today. My name is [NAME], and I'm joined by my colleague, [NAME]. We're from the Urban Institute, a nonprofit, nonpartisan research organization based in Washington, DC. As mentioned in my email, [INSERT NAME AND ROLE OF REFERRING INDIVIDUAL] indicated that you can help our team plan for the case study. During our meeting today, I will provide an overview of the project and the case study, the individuals who we may want to interview or engage in a focus group, and the process for scheduling interviews and focus groups.

The Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) within the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) contracted with the Urban Institute to lead a project called "Understanding Supply-Building and Sustainability Efforts of the Child Care and Early Education Market." As part of the larger project, we are meeting with states that planned or are implementing supply-building or sustainability strategies we identified through a web scan or survey.

First, we know Lead Agencies sometimes implement multiple strategies to build and sustain the supply of child care and early education. The goal of this call is to plan for the case study of [STRATEGY].

To begin I would like to tell you about the case study we plan to conduct in your state.

To collect data for the case studies we will conduct virtual interviews with key individuals you identify as being integral to the design and implementation of [STRATEGY]. We anticipate these individuals to include you or someone on your staff who was involved in planning and decision-making about [STRATEGY], up to three individuals who lead/led implementation of [STRATEGY], and up to three key people involved in collecting and analyzing data about and/or evaluating [STRATEGY].

[FOR STATES WHERE WE PLAN TO CONDUCT FOCUS GROUPS WITH CHILD CARE PROVIDERS: We also want to conduct a focus group with child care providers who may have experience with the [STRATEGY] to learn their perspectives. These focus groups will also be conducted virtually via Zoom.]

[IN STATES WHERE WE PLAN TO INTERVIEW STRATEGY RECIPIENTS OTHER THAN CHILD CARE PROVIDERS: We also want to interview [OTHER STRATEGY RECIPIENTS] who may have experience with the [STRATEGY] to learn their perspectives. The individuals may include [ADD DESCRIPTION].]

Later on in our discussion today I want to get your input on who we may want to interview.

The information we gather during the case studies will be used to provide useful information to our federal project officers at the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, which is the research arm of the ACF, as well as staff at the federal Office of Child Care within ACF. Following the case studies, we will prepare and share with ACF written memos describing each strategy and our findings from interviews and focus groups.

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Importantly, we will identify your state in our memorandum to ACF. We will not identify you by name, but they will know we spoke with a CCDF administrator and staff members from each state. We may also produce a report or brief that will be published online to summarize information from the case studies. In this report or brief, we will discuss findings across the states that participate in case studies. We will not name the states or the specific individuals we interview.

Do you have any questions?

Ok, let's start discussing the types of information we would like to cover during each interview and who might be the best person or people to interview. For some of these interviews, it may make sense to include one person. For other interviews, it might make sense to include two or three people. Typically, we would like to include no more than three people in an interview or it can get difficult to hear from everyone.

During one interview we want to speak with CCDF Lead Agency staff who were involved in planning and decision-making about [STRATEGY]. This interview will be approximately 90 minutes. The types of topics we will discuss include:

- A description of [STRATEGY] including the goals and intended outcomes
- How the state decided on [STRATEGY] and the initial planning process
- Ongoing planning and implementation of [STRATEGY]
- Funding and resources required to implement [STRATEGY]
- Types of data collected about [STRATEGY] implementation and outcomes and how data are used
- Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

It is ok if the interview participants cannot speak about all these topics. Our goal is to gather information about these topics across the interviews we conduct.

[DISCUSS STAFF WHO CAN SPEAK TO THE TOPICS DESCRIBED AND WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN THE INTERVIEW. GATHER NAME, EMAIL ADDRESS, AND PHONE NUMBER. IF POINT OF CONTACT DOES NOT HAVE THIS INFORMATION AVAILABLE, GATHER AS A FOLLOW-UP TO THE CALL].

For a second interview we want to speak with individuals who lead/led implementation of [STRATEGY]. This interview will be approximately 90 minutes. These individuals may work for the CCDF Lead Agency or a partner organization. In most states, we expect these individuals will work at the state level, but in some cases it may be one or more people who lead implementation regionally or locally. This interview will cover many of the same topics as the interview with CCDF Lead Agency staff, but we will focus more specifically on what it takes to implement [STRATEGY].

[DISCUSS STAFF WHO CAN SPEAK TO THE TOPICS DESCRIBED AND WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN THE INTERVIEW. GATHER NAME, EMAIL ADDRESS, AND PHONE NUMBER. IF POINT OF CONTACT DOES NOT HAVE THIS INFORMATION AVAILABLE, GATHER AS A FOLLOW-UP TO THE CALL].

For a third interview we want to speak with key people involved in collecting and analyzing data about and/or evaluating [STRATEGY]. These individuals may work as a data lead or internal evaluation lead for the CCDF Lead Agency or they may work for a partner organization such as a research and evaluation

firm or a university. This interview will be approximately 60 minutes. The types of topics we will discuss include:

- Types of data that are collected about implementation and outcomes, including any evaluations that have been conducted, are underway, or are planned
- Descriptions of the data elements collected
- Information about data storage and accessibility
- How data are used and any findings that have emerged
- Successes, challenges, and lessons learned

[DISCUSS STAFF WHO CAN SPEAK TO THE TOPICS DESCRIBED AND WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN THE INTERVIEW. GATHER NAME, EMAIL ADDRESS, AND PHONE NUMBER. IF POINT OF CONTACT DOES NOT HAVE THIS INFORMATION AVAILABLE, GATHER AS A FOLLOW-UP TO THE CALL].

Next, I would like to discuss the best approach to scheduling interviews. I can reach out to individuals directly to schedule interviews, or you could work directly with individuals to identify dates and times.

[DISCUSS APPROACH PREFERRED BY POINT OF CONTACT. IF POINT OF CONTACT WILL SCHEDULE WE WILL PROVIDE DATES AND TIMES THAT WORK FOR OUR TEAM. IF POINT OF CONTACT RECOMMENDS OUR TEAM SCHEDULES, ASK IF THE POINT OF CONTACT WOULD BE WILLING TO SEND AN INTRODUCTORY EMAIL TO INDIVIDUALS.]

[IN STATES WHERE WE PLAN TO CONDUCT FOCUS GROUPS WITH PROVIDERS] We also want to conduct a focus group with child care providers who may have experienced the [STRATEGY] to learn their perspectives. As with interviews, focus groups will be conducted virtually over Zoom. It will last approximately 75 minutes. We would like to include 6 to 8 participants in the focus group. We are particularly interested in speaking with providers who [INSERT DESCRIPTION OF WHO IS ELIGIBLE BASED ON STRATEGY FOCUS POPULATION].

To recruit providers to participate in the focus group, we can work with you to ask representatives from an organization that works directly with providers on [STRATEGY] for their assistance. On past projects, we have shared a flyer with the representatives and asked them to share the flyer with potentially eligible and interested providers. Providers can then sign up for the focus group using a QR code or by calling our research team. Do you think that approach will work well? [IF YES] Can you introduce us to community organization representatives or share their contact information with us and we can reach out directly? [IF NO] What approach do you think would work better?

[IF WE HAVE IDENTIFIED STRATEGY RECIPIENTS OTHER THAN CHILD CARE PROVIDERS AS POSSIBLE RESPONDENTS, DISCUSS THE TYPES OF RESPONDENTS THAT MAY BE MOST APPROPRIATE BASED ON OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE STRATEGY]. We also want to interview [OTHER STRATEGY RECIPIENTS] who may have experienced the [STRATEGY] to learn their perspectives. We would like to interview approximately 3 individuals. We can schedule this as a small group interview or as individual interviews. The interviews will be conducted virtually over Zoom and will last approximately 60 minutes.

[DISCUSS APPROACH TO IDENTIFYING THESE INDIVIDUALS AND SCHEDULING THE INTERVIEW(S).]

Before we end, I would like to get your input on the timing of the case study. Even though all activities will be virtual we would like to try to conduct interviews and focus groups in a single week if possible. Thinking about the individuals we would like to collect data from, is there a week or weeks between [MONTH AND MONTH] that might work best? Are there any weeks during that period that you know won't work or that we should avoid? If you want some time to check in with others about the timing that is fine too. I can follow-up with you by email.

One final note, as we communicate in the weeks ahead about data collection activities, please do not share the names and contact information of any interview or focus group participants by email. I set up a document on our secure site that we can use to share information. I will share information with you about how to use this secure drive in a follow-up email.