U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Office of Policy Development and Research

PD&R

Improving Housing Subsidy Surveys

Data Collection Techniques for Identifying the Housing Subsidy Status of Survey Respondents

Improving Housing Subsidy Survey Data Collection Techniques for Identifying the Housing Subsidy Status of Survey Respondents

Improving Housing Subsidy Surveys

Data Collection Techniques for Identifying the Housing Subsidy Status of Survey Respondents

Prepared for:

Office of Policy Development and Research

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Prepared by:

Erika L. Gordon

Sandra Chipungu

Lisa Marie Bagley

Sophia I. Zanakos

ORC Macro

Calverton, Maryland

Contract No. C-OPC-21762

March 2005

Visit PD&R's Web Site

www.huduser.org

to find this report and others sponsored by
HUD's Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R).
Other services of HUD USER, PD&R's Research Information Service, include listservs;
special interest, bimonthly publications (best practices, significant studies from other sources);
access to public use databases; hotline 1-800-245-2691 for help accessing the information you need.

Acknowledgments

We acknowledge the support and assistance received from Harold R. Holzman who, in his role as Government Technical Representative, provided valuable guidance and thoughtful review.

The contents of this report are the views of the contractor and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development or the U.S. Government.

Contents

Executive Summary..... 1

Chapter 1. Background..... 5

Introduction..... 5

The Need To Improve Survey Methods for Identifying Recipients of Housing Subsidies: The Case of the American Housing Survey..... 5

Previous Attempts at Improving the AHS: The 1995 NORC Study..... 6

Chapter 2. Research Methodology: The Ethnographic and Cognitive Components..... 7

Research Questions in the Current Study..... 7

Study Components..... 9

Sampling Strategy for the Ethnographic and Cognitive Research..... 10

Sampling Procedure..... 11

Data Collection Procedures..... 12

Targeted Sample Size Versus Actual Sample Size..... 16

Chapter 3. Ethnographic and Cognitive Data Collection and Analysis Strategies..... 18

Ethnographic Study Component..... 18

Cognitive Study Component..... 19

Chapter 4. Ethnographic and Cognitive Findings..... 23

Ethnographic Wave 1: Findings..... 23

Ethnographic Wave 2: Findings..... 26

Cognitive Wave 1: Findings..... 28

Cognitive Wave 2: Findings..... 30

Chapter 5. The False Positive Study 40
Introduction 40
Methodological Approach 40
Sampling 41
Fieldwork To Obtain Cognitive Interviews 43
Analytical Approach 44
A Closer Look at False Positive Respondents 44
Comparison of Screener and Cognitive Responses for Confirmed False Positives... 51

Chapter 6. Final Recommendations 53
Introduction 53
Proposed Modifications to the Current AHS Questions 53
Order of Questions 60
Recommendations on Concepts and Terminology 62

List of Tables

Table 2.1. Central Research Questions of the Study—Improving Housing Subsidy Surveys: Data Collection Techniques for Identifying the Housing Subsidy Status of Survey Respondents 7
Table 2.2. Questions Currently Used To Classify Housing Subsidy Status in the AHS 9
Table 2.3. Wave 1 Ethnographic Study Targeted Sample 13
Table 2.4. Wave 1 Ethnography Sample (Actual Interviews Completed) 13
Table 2.5. Wave 2 Ethnographic Study Targeted Sample 14
Table 2.6. Wave 2 Ethnography Sample (Actual Interviews Completed) 14
Table 2.7. Wave 1 Cognitive Study Targeted Sample 15
Table 2.8. Wave 1 Cognitive Sample (Actual Interviews Completed) 15
Table 2.9. Wave 2 Cognitive Study Targeted Sample 16
Table 2.10. Wave 2 Cognitive Sample (Actual Interviews Completed) 16

Table 3.1. Wave 1 Key Housing Subsidy Concepts and Their Relation to the Current AHS Questions About Housing Subsidies 21
Table 3.2. Main Topics Covered in the Wave 2 Cognitive Testing Form and Number of Completed Interviews 22

Table 4.1. Wave 1 Percentage of Respondents Who Understood Each Housing Subsidy Concept and the Mean Certainty Rating for Answers to Questions About the Concept..... 28

Table 4.2. Wave 1 Percentage of Respondents Who Had Heard of Terms and, for All Respondents, the Mean Certainty Rating for the Definitions Provided..... 29

Table 4.3. Wave 2 Revised Definitions of Key Housing Subsidy Concepts About Housing Subsidies..... 31

Table 4.4. Wave 2 Percentage of Respondents Who Understood Each Housing Subsidy Concept and the Mean Certainty Rating for Answers to Questions About the Concept..... 32

Table 5.1. Results of the Screener Phase of the False Positives Study..... 42

Table 5.2. False Positive Cognitive Sample..... 44

Table 5.3. False Positive Categorization of the False Positive Study Participants by Geographic Location..... 47

Table 5.4. Summary of Data Generated by the False Positive Screener..... 49

Table 5.5. Summary of Cognitive Data for Confirmed False Positives, HUD-subsidized (Public Housing) Respondents, and Suspected Subsidy Recipients..... 50

Table 6.1. Question Order for the Proposed Modified Questions To Classify Housing Subsidy Status in the AHS..... 61

Executive Summary
Improving Housing Subsidy Surveys: Data Collection Techniques for Identifying the Housing Subsidy Status of Survey Respondents

Background

An ongoing problem in the American Housing Survey (AHS) and other similar surveys is that respondents often incorrectly report their housing subsidy status. This includes subsidy recipients who incorrectly report the type of assistance they receive and "false positives" (that is, people with low incomes who are eligible for housing assistance and who report receiving such assistance even though they do not). Although the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) sponsors the AHS, the U.S. Census Bureau conducts the data collection.

The inaccuracies in identifying the housing subsidy status of survey respondents have made the use of the general survey information from the AHS a doubtful source of input for HUD policy deliberations and impact evaluations. The AHS data are used in an annual report on housing quality that Congress requires of the President (that is, the National Urban Policy Report). In addition, the AHS data are used in the Reports to Congress on Worst Case Housing Needs, which the Senate Appropriations Committee has directed HUD to prepare since 1990. Problems with the accuracy of AHS data (that is, substantial overestimates in the number of subsidized housing units) were discussed in HUD's 2000 Worst Case Housing Needs Report, *Rental Housing Assistance—The Worsening Crisis* (March 2000). Unfortunately, difficulties persist. Recent published AHS estimates (October 2002) of the number of public housing units in the United States exceed HUD's own estimates of just this one type of subsidized housing by more than a half million households.

In an effort to improve the accuracy of the AHS and other surveys that include housing subsidy recipients among their respondents, the Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R) launched a research project entitled "Improving Housing Subsidy Surveys: Data Collection Techniques for Identifying the Housing Subsidy Status of Survey Respondents." Macro International Inc., an Opinion Research Corporation company (ORC Macro), conducted the research under contract to HUD. This research project was composed of three components. The initial data collection effort looked at attitudes about and experience with housing subsidies in a diverse sample of housing subsidy recipients (that is, an ethnographic research approach). Then, a similarly diverse sample of recipients was queried about their understanding of the terms and concepts generally associated with major housing subsidy programs (that is, a cognitive research approach). Finally, false positives were identified and interviewed about their reporting errors. At the core of all three components were the six AHS questions that are used to classify the housing subsidy status of respondents. The PD&R project probed how well both housing subsidy respondents and false positives understood the language used in AHS questions and the concepts underlying the housing subsidy process itself.

Findings and Recommendations

Terminology

Interviews with known housing subsidy recipients suggested that some terminology currently used in the AHS should be avoided when querying individuals about their housing subsidy status. The researchers found that some terms are not well understood and seldom used or are

used in ways that might appear unconventional from the perspective of HUD and Census Bureau staff familiar with housing subsidy programs. Included among such terms are the following:

- Public Housing Authority (PHA).
- Certificate.
- Address.
- Renewal.
- HUD.
- Section 8.

Concepts

Interviews with housing subsidy recipients alerted ORC Macro researchers to some concepts that these recipients viewed as especially important with respect to the mechanics of housing subsidies. From both the ethnographic and cognitive research perspectives, the general agreement is that terms commonly used in one's community combine with one's personal history to influence how one responds to survey questions. Hence, a large portion of this final report is devoted to describing and analyzing material obtained from indepth interviews with subsidy recipients and false positives. Below are several examples of concepts found to be particularly salient to subsidy recipients.

The Relation Between Income and Rent. Most subsidy recipients correctly expressed the fact that their rent amount is related to their income. Respondents were well aware that, if their income increased, their rent would increase.

The Housing Voucher and Its Provision of Housing Choice. In all phases of the research, most respondents were able to provide correct answers, based on their respective rental subsidy status, to questions asking them if they received a housing voucher. That housing vouchers afforded one the opportunity to choose a dwelling place was salient in respondents' understanding of Section 8 tenant-based assistance.

Assignment of Housing. The idea of being assigned to an apartment or building resonated with most respondents. As with the concept of housing vouchers, the presence or absence of personal choice was a major theme in their recollections of obtaining a place to live.

In contrast, some concepts traditionally thought to be salient to investigating housing subsidy status were not. Notable in this category was the notion that annual income reporting/verification is valuable in distinguishing between subsidy and nonsubsidy recipients. Although the understanding that receipt of a subsidy requires verification of income was clear among respondents in all three phases of this study, conceptual difficulties arose because this procedure (verification of income) is not limited to housing subsidy recipients alone. Some nonrecipients were also required to annually provide information about their income, thereby leading to confusion in answering current AHS questions.

Recommendations for Modifications to Current AHS Questions

The suggested changes presented here were derived from the combined analysis of ethnographic, cognitive, and false positive data. The data collection was designed and executed so that the results of earlier waves of interviews, based on the actual current six AHS "housing subsidy" questions, could be used in formulating the structure and content of later interviews.

This process led to what amounted to serial revisions in the content of AHS questions. The reader should note, however, that the suggested modifications presented here were not actually tested as such. These suggested changes are based on what were judged to be improvements in respondents' ability to accurately identify and describe their housing subsidy status.

Current AHS Question 1. As part of your rental agreement, do you need to answer questions about your income whenever your lease is up for renewal? (Yes/No)

Proposed Modified Question. Each year, as part of your rental agreement, is your household required to complete *recertification* by reporting income or who lives with you to determine the amount of rent you pay? (Yes/No)

The modification of the language is designed to (1) apply more frequently used terminology and (2) incorporate an additional type of official inquiry familiar to housing subsidy recipients, but not to renters at large. Furthermore, the research indicated that the concept of *recertification* as an annual vetting process is well understood among housing subsidy recipients.

Current AHS Question 2. To whom do you report your income?

The report suggests that this question be deleted.

Respondents did not attach much importance to whom they reported their income. Furthermore, many respondents were unsure with respect to "whom" the report was made. The impact of this uncertainty is exacerbated by the decentralization and local variation associated with administration procedures across the PHA universe.

Current AHS Question 3. Do you pay a lower rent because the government is paying part of the cost of the unit? (Yes/No/Don't Know)

Proposed Modified Question. Is your rent amount lower because you are in a federal, state, or local government-housing program? (Yes/No)

Respondents were sometimes unsure as to what entity the term "government" referred and offered a variety of definitions for this term. Housing subsidy recipients who answered this AHS question incorrectly indicated not infrequently that the housing authority or HUD paid for their housing. Some recipients responded incorrectly because they did not think of "HUD" or "the housing authority" as the "government." Some false positives said that their Social Security income paid for their housing and, therefore, the government provided them with rental assistance.

Current AHS Question 4. Is the building owned by a Public Housing Authority? (Yes/No/Don't Know)

Proposed Modified Question. Is the housing authority your landlord? (Yes/No)

Public housing residents used and understood the term "housing authority," often in conjunction with the name of their PHA (for example, the Allegheny County Housing Authority or the Chicago Housing Authority). The term "Public Housing Authority" was not used. The concepts of housing authority and building ownership were not often linked. Overall, the concept of building ownership was not at all central to how housing subsidy recipients understood the concept of rental assistance. Some respondents defined a "housing authority" as an agency that helped low-income people obtain housing. Note also that respondents tended to have a firm understanding of the term "landlord" as one who manages the property, collects rent, or provides maintenance for their building.

Current AHS Question 5. How did you come to live here? Did you apply to management here, or did an agency, such as Public Housing Authority, assign this address to you? (Respondent selects from four alternatives.)

Proposed Modified Question. Did a housing authority *assign* this apartment or building to your household?

1. Assigned to a specific apartment or building.
2. Not assigned.

Regardless of subsidy type, respondents were able to recall their housing application process and whether they were assigned to housing. However, notable difficulties arose in conceptual understanding with respect to the terms "assign" and "address." For a substantial proportion of Section 8 tenant-based interviewees, the housing authority's provision of a list of properties was understood as being "assigned" because the list or referral was interpreted as narrowing the scope of potential housing choices. Confusion over the term "address" was precipitated by the recollection that the Post Office rather than the housing authority assigns one's address. This confusion was repeatedly linked to respondent errors on the current AHS question.

Current AHS Question 6. Did a Public Housing Authority or some other similar agency give you a *certificate* or *voucher* to help pay for this units? (Yes/No)

Proposed Modified Question. Does your household have a housing voucher that allows you to choose where you live and pays for the rent? (Yes/No)

The certificate program under Section 8 tenant-based housing no longer exists. But, in any event, respondents tended to have difficulty in correctly defining "certificate." In contrast, a high degree of both certainty and accuracy existed as to receipt of a housing voucher. This situation was linked to a clear understanding of the portability and flexibility of housing choice that a voucher confers on its holder.

Building on the concept of housing choice and its saliency to this study's respondents, the ORC Macro research team suggested that an additional question be added to serve as further verification of the housing subsidy status of AHS respondents.

Proposed New Question. Can you use your housing voucher to move to another location? (Yes/No)

The addition of this question further verifies the housing subsidy status of respondents by confirming that recipients either do or do not receive a housing voucher that provides choice and portability. The notion of portability points to clear differences between the experience of Section 8 tenant-based subsidy recipients (now Housing Choice Voucher Program [HCVP] participants) and residents in public housing or in Section 8 project-based apartment complexes.

Suggested Order of Questions

Grouped as a unit and presented with appropriate instructions (see Chapter 5), the proposed modified questions minimize the use of skip patterns and "don't know" responses. The ordering of the questions is designed to first identify respondents who do not receive a housing subsidy and then parse actual subsidy recipients into public housing, Section 8 tenant-based or project-based (HCVP), and "other."

Chapter 1. Background

Introduction

This report provides the findings of a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)-sponsored research project entitled *Improving Housing Subsidy Surveys: Data Collection Techniques for Identifying the Housing Subsidy Status of Survey Respondents* to the American Housing Survey (AHS). ORC Macro conducted the actual research under contract to HUD. The primary objective of the study was to develop more accurate methods to correctly identify the housing subsidy status of respondents for use in large-scale surveys such as the AHS.

In its pursuit of more accurate methods of correctly identifying the recipients of housing subsidies through survey research, ORC Macro developed a study design that sought to conduct a detailed examination of respondents' understandings and misunderstandings regarding their housing subsidy status. This report begins with a discussion of the collection of housing subsidy information by the AHS, followed by a presentation of the research objectives of the current study. A discussion of the research design appears next, including an indepth depiction of the study's research questions, sampling strategy, and data collection methodology.

The authors envisage this document as a point of departure for future research. Hence, although some readers may find the treatment of the research methodology and associated findings to be unnecessarily exhaustive, please keep in mind that the level of detail is meant to facilitate replication. This report ends with recommendations for improvements in the AHS.

The Need To Improve Survey Methods for Identifying Recipients of Housing Subsidies: The Case of the American Housing Survey

An ongoing problem in the AHS and other similar surveys is that respondents often incorrectly report their housing subsidy status. This includes subsidy recipients who incorrectly report the type of assistance they receive as well as "false positives"—that is, persons with low incomes who are eligible for housing assistance and report receiving such assistance even though they do not. Although HUD sponsors the AHS, the U.S. Census Bureau conducts the actual data collection.

The inaccuracies in identifying the housing subsidy status of survey respondents have made the use of the general survey information from the AHS a doubtful source of input for HUD policy deliberations and impact evaluations. The AHS data are used in an annual report on housing quality that Congress requires of the President (that is, the National Urban Policy Report). In addition, the AHS data are used in the reports on worst case housing needs, which the Senate Appropriations Committee has directed HUD to prepare since 1990. Problems with the accuracy of AHS data (that is, substantial overestimates in the number of subsidized housing units) were discussed in HUD's 2000 Report titled *Rental Housing Assistance—The Worsening Crisis: A*

Report to Congress on Worst Case Housing Needs (March 2000). Unfortunately, difficulties persist. The most recent published AHS estimates of the number of public housing units in the United States (October 2002) exceed HUD's own estimates of just this one type of subsidized housing by more than a half million households.

In its 2000 Report to Congress, HUD recommended improving the AHS questions to increase the accuracy of information on housing assistance status classifications. In line with this recommendation, this current study developed, based largely on interviews with known housing subsidy recipients, a new set of questions about housing subsidies and then performed additional research (that is, the "false positive" study described in Chapter 5) that continued to shape these questions and also provided some preliminary evidence that these new questions have the potential for eliciting more accurate data on respondents' housing assistance status.

Previous Attempts at Improving the AHS: The 1995 NORC Study

This current study is the second attempt by HUD's Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R) to revise the AHS questions to improve their accuracy in classifying housing subsidy recipients. The National Opinion Research Center (NORC) conducted a two-phase study in 1995 that led to some improvements, but it also had some notable limitations.[1] In the first phase of the study, cognitive interviewing was conducted with 11 respondents, all but one of whom received some form of housing subsidy. The goals of the interviews were to find out how respondents described their housing assistance, discover how they went about getting housing assistance, and illuminate respondents' understanding of terms related to housing subsidy used in the AHS. After examining the interview results, NORC conducted the second phase of the study. In consultation with HUD, NORC pilot-tested the revised survey questions designed to elicit more accurate information about housing subsidy status. These questions were answered by 247 respondents, all of whom either lived in Section 8 project-based housing or received Section 8 vouchers (Section 8 tenant-based housing). For most questions, about two-thirds of the respondents gave correct answers. Most respondents expressed some correct ideas, such as knowing to whom they were required to report their income or whether they received vouchers for their housing.

The 1995 NORC study provided important insights into housing subsidy recipients' understanding of their subsidy status. The report also discussed the limitations of the study, however. For example, the questions presented in the 1995 NORC study still yielded incorrect housing subsidy status classifications for many respondents, although they were an improvement over the original AHS questions. As NORC acknowledged in its report, much room for improvement of the questions remains. NORC also acknowledged in its final report that the study participants were not representative of a wide range of housing subsidy recipients. All the respondents lived in Chicago, and all but one received Section 8 assistance (either project-based or vouchers). The initial part of the study was exploratory and involved a small sample size (11 respondents). Therefore, an indepth, detailed report of respondents' correct ideas and misconceptions was not presented.

---

[1] The results of the 1995 National Opinion Research Center study can be found in the report, *Identifying Recipients of Housing Assistance Through Survey Questions*.

Chapter 2. Research Methodology: The Ethnographic and Cognitive Components

Research Questions in the Current Study

The current study used existing American Housing Survey (AHS) questions about housing subsidies as the point of departure for investigating respondents' experiences and ideas related to housing subsidies. The study accomplished this through a multiwave design using distinct data collection methods: (1) a two-wave ethnographic study, (2) a two-wave cognitive testing procedure, and (3) a separately designed false positive study. Each stage of data collection was designed to build on the findings of the previous stage. Table 2.1 presents the central research questions of the study.

Table 2.1. Central Research Questions of the Study—Improving Housing Subsidy Surveys: Data Collection Techniques for Identifying the Housing Subsidy Status of Survey Respondents

Question Number	Research Question
1	Can improved survey questions be developed that enable more accurate classification of respondents' housing subsidy status?
2	What do survey respondents understand and misunderstand about housing subsidies, and are the key understandings and misunderstandings related to terminology or underlying concepts about housing subsidies? (Respondents' answers to questions about housing subsidies depend on their knowledge of housing subsidies. Therefore, to improve the questions, gaining a more complete picture of respondents' knowledge is crucial.)
3	Do different groups of respondents (for example, respondents of different racial/ethnic backgrounds, different geographic locations) exhibit different levels of knowledge about concepts and terms related to housing subsidies?

The study was designed to address the following situations leading to misidentification of respondents because of improper answers to the current AHS questions:

Situation 1. Correct terminology but incorrect understanding. Correct labeling or identification of one's housing subsidy does not imply correct understanding of the concepts to which a label refers. Respondents who can correctly state their housing subsidy status may or may not understand the basic characteristics of the housing subsidy they receive.

Situation 2. Incorrect terminology but correct understanding. A different kind of knowledge may be found among respondents who do not correctly label their housing

subsidy status but have a correct underlying understanding of their status. Such respondents have correct concepts about their housing subsidy status but lack the appropriate language to describe their status.

Situation 3. Incorrect understanding and incorrect terminology. An even lower level of understanding may be found among respondents who misunderstand the concepts as well as the words. These respondents neither correctly label nor correctly understand their housing subsidy status. Despite their lack of knowledge about their housing subsidy status, however, such respondents may have some knowledge that a survey analyst can use to correctly identify their status. For example, a given respondent may not understand the conceptual distinction between Section 8 project-based housing and public housing but may remember going through an application process unique to Section 8 project-based housing. If the respondent is able to say that he or she went through an application process that is diagnostic of Section 8 owner-administered housing status, a survey analyst could use this information to correctly classify the respondent's housing subsidy status.

As indicated in the foregoing discussion, housing subsidy questions from the most recent iteration of the AHS were a fundamental component of the research design. The present study was conducted in waves, and, for each component, the current AHS questions served as the starting point for investigation. Table 2.2 lists the current AHS questions along with the associated skip patterns and interviewer instructions.

Table 2.2. Questions Currently Used To Classify Housing Subsidy Status in the AHS

Question Number	Question
1	As a part of your rental agreement, do you need to answer questions about your income whenever your lease is up for renewal? (1) Yes (2) No
2	To whom do you report your income? [***READ THESE CATEGORIES TO THE RESPONDENT***] (1) A building manager or landlord? (2) A Public Housing authority or a State or local housing agency? (3) Or, someone else? Specify (4) Don't know [***DO NOT READ THIS ONE TO THE RESPONDENT***]
3	Do you pay a lower rent because the government is paying part of the cost of the unit? (1) Yes (2) No (3) Don't know
4	Is the building owned by a Public Housing authority? (1) Yes (2) No (3) Don't know
5	How did you come to live here? Did you apply to the management here, or did an agency, such as Public Housing authority, assign this address to you? (1) Applied to management on own (2) Assigned to specific address
6	Did a Public Housing authority, or some similar agency, give you a CERTIFICATE or VOUCHER to help pay the rent for this unit? (1) Yes (2) No

Study Components

The present study used a multiwave research design featuring ethnographic interviewing and cognitive testing to probe individuals' perceptions of their housing subsidy status. Each wave used the AHS questions to identify initial areas where respondents seemed to experience difficulties and then probed along ethnographic or cognitive lines of inquiry to develop modifications to the AHS questions. Each stage of data collection was designed to build on the findings from the previous stage. The ethnographic and cognitive studies were designed in two waves: an initial exploratory data collection and a more targeted data collection based on the findings of the first wave. The false positive study, the third component of this research, was conceptually different and is discussed in detail in Chapter 5. Its first component, the screener

phase, was necessary to locate actual false positive respondents, while the second component, the cognitive interview, was conducted only with those who were determined to belong in the false positive pool of respondents. In the false positive component, the AHS questions were used as the screener to identify a sample of potential false positives. An overview of each phase of the research project, presented in the order in which it occurred, is presented below.

Ethnographic study—Wave 1. This stage of data collection was designed to be exploratory, "mapping the territory" of recipients' knowledge of their housing subsidy by eliciting respondents' thoughts on key topics. This established the groundwork for later, more structured cognitive testing.

Preliminary cognitive testing—Wave 1. The preliminary cognitive testing focused on selected aspects of cognition arising from the key themes and terminology of the Wave 1 ethnography. It asked respondents to help rephrase the current AHS questions in ways that would yield the correct response and followed up on ideas presented in the ethnographic work.

Ethnographic study—Wave 2. This wave followed up on findings for the initial waves of both the ethnographic and cognitive data collections. Specific words, concepts, and recollections diagnostic of housing subsidy status were investigated.

Cognitive interviewing—Wave 2. A broad set of revised questions, developed through preliminary analysis of ethnographic and cognitive findings, was presented using a modular approach. The questions incorporated the findings from the previous waves and tested alternative wordings of similar concepts.

False positive screener interview. This phase identified false positive respondents. For the purposes of this investigation, a false positive respondent was defined as an income-eligible person who answers AHS questions as though she or he receives a housing subsidy but, in fact, is not participating in a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) housing program, as evidenced by HUD administrative records. This component of the study used the current AHS questionnaire to screen for potential false positive respondents.

False positive cognitive interview. False positive respondents were asked to answer a revised set of questions emerging from the Wave 2 cognitive interviewing.

Sampling Strategy for the Ethnographic and Cognitive Research

In the ethnographic and cognitive components of the study, three variables were used to construct a sampling frame representative of housing subsidy recipients: race/ethnicity, geographic location, and type of housing assistance received. Three categories of race/ethnicity were used: non-Hispanic African American, Hispanic, and non-Hispanic Caucasian. Six geographic areas were selected. The respondents were chosen from housing subsidy recipients served by selected local Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) in Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, and Pennsylvania. With respect to geographic diversity in the sampling frame, the PHAs identified and targeted for this study were selected for several reasons. First, this study wanted to expand the work of the 1995 NORC study by extending the investigation to include respondents in several nationally dispersed geographic locations. This criterion was deemed important to account for regional differences in respondents' understanding of their housing subsidy as well as distinctions arising from rural, urban, or suburban environments. Next, the areas were selected with an eye toward to the availability of a diverse racial/ethnic population in each selected housing subsidy programs. The ability to select racially diverse respondents from the same PHA/project in a geographic location was important. This selection

ability provided an opportunity to detect cultural differences that may impact subsidy recipients' knowledge of the rental assistance. The availability of racially diverse populations in a single program type in a specific geographic location also allowed the study to minimize potential variations in PHA/project environments that could threaten the validity of comparisons across stages of the research. The PHA/project environment may have an impact on subsidy recipients' knowledge. For example, some PHAs might administer several assistance programs (Housing Choice Voucher Program [HCVP] and public housing, as well as Section 8 project-based and Low-Income Housing Tax Credit [LIHTC] Program). Because more assistance options are available in such PHAs, their staff might provide tenants and applicants with more information about the assistance options available to them, thus resulting in more knowledge of housing subsidies. Because such "local variation" among PHAs/projects was thought to perhaps play an important role in knowledge of subsidies, the selected PHAs/projects were held constant in a given area across waves.

Lastly, the sample was composed of individuals participating in one the following four types of housing assistance programs:

1. Public housing.
2. Section 8 project-based housing.
3. Section 8 tenant-based housing.
4. LIHTC Program, a non-HUD housing assistance program.

Note that the LIHTC Program is a common alternative to the HUD programs for providing housing for low-income individuals. At present, some 700,000 households are in the LIHTC Program nationwide. At the time that this study was launched in 2001, more than a half million LIHTC Program households existed. Therefore, focusing on LIHTC enabled this study to represent participants in the largest and most important type of non-HUD housing assistance program for low-income individuals. In some ways, the process of applying for LIHTC housing is similar to the process of applying for Section 8 tenant-based housing or public housing. For example, staff in some local PHAs process applications for LIHTC projects as well as Section 8 tenant-based housing. This similarity is important because it may lead some respondents to give incorrect answers on the AHS or similar surveys. With respect to the construction of the actual survey samples, note that one can identify and locate LIHTC participants with relative ease because lists of all LIHTC Programs are available on the HUD USER website (www.huduser.org), along with contact information and locations.

Sampling Procedure

For the ethnographic and cognitive studies, known housing subsidy recipients were randomly selected from pools of racial/ethnic groupings from in each selected PHA/project in each of the six geographic locations. For public housing, Section 8 tenant-based subsidies, and Section 8 project-based subsidies, tenant samples were drawn from databases of HUD subsidy recipients: the Multifamily Tenant Characteristics System (MTCS) and the Tenant Rental Assistance Certification System (TRACS). From each LIHTC project, ORC Macro requested the names of 10 tenants to participate in the ethnographic and cognitive interviews. An initial request for a sample of tenants to interview for the respective waves of the ethnographic and cognitive studies was submitted to HUD in February 2002. First, the tenants were randomly selected within strata—that is, the geographic area, housing program, and tenant race/ethnicity. Specifically, the sample was designed to ensure approximately equal representation of the four housing programs, the six geographic areas, and three racial/ethnic categories.

To make sure that sampled tenants were receiving the type of subsidy listed in MTCS/TRACS, the research team went through a process of establishing contacts with a local advisor at each selected PHA/project. ORC Macro submitted a request to HUD for information to use in contacting staff in PHAs/projects who then were approached to help in this study. The ORC Macro researchers requested the name of the executive director, a telephone number, and mailing address for each selected PHA/project. For Section 8 project-based housing projects, ORC Macro requested the name of the owner, a telephone number, and a mailing address. In addition to the request for a sample of tenants, the researchers collected analogous information for a sample of LIHTC projects from a database that was available at the HUD USER website.

Subsequently, staff in each selected PHA/project participated in a brief telephone interview designed to (1) identify an appropriate "local staff advisor" to help in identifying and locating interviewees; (2) describe program structures (for example, the mix of housing programs administered by a given PHA/project); and (3) describe characteristics of the local tenant populations (for example, the percentage speaking Spanish and other languages). When the local staff advisor was identified and the tenant sample was supplied from HUD databases, the local staff advisor was asked to confirm the subsidy and address information for the list of sampled individuals that formed the pool of potential respondents for both the ethnographic and cognitive studies. In part, this verification process was needed as a hedge against out-of-date or incomplete MTCS/TRACS data provided. Also, confirming that the sampled individuals were still receiving housing assistance and collecting current contact information (for example, telephone numbers), which is not available in MTCS/TRACS, was necessary.

Data Collection Procedures

When the contact information for sampled tenants could be verified independently or with the assistance of the PHA/project, the research team initiated contact with the selected tenants (randomly selected based on a combination of housing subsidy status, geographic location, and race/ethnicity) through an introductory letter. The letter explained the study, described a $20 incentive offered for participation, and indicated that an interviewer would contact them by telephone to schedule the interview. Nearly 1 week after the letters were sent, field interviewers assigned to one of the six geographic locations called to schedule a time for an interview. Telephone contact attempts were made at times that tended to elicit high numbers of responses. If a respondent could not be contacted by telephone, the interviewer attempted to visit the individual at home to schedule an interview. During the telephone call to schedule the interview, the interviewer respectfully requested the individual's participation. If at the time of initial contact a selected tenant was reluctant to participate in the study, another attempt was made in several days' time to persuade the individual to participate. If the individual still refused to participate, the refusal was considered final, and the interviewer attempted to schedule an interview with another individual with the same subsidy status, geographic location, and race/ethnicity.

Selection biases were avoided by providing interviewers with lists of randomly selected tenants in specific strata; interviewers were instructed to go through the list in order, attempting to contact each individual before moving to the next person on the list. Note that individuals participated in only one type of interview (either ethnographic or cognitive) and in only one wave of the data collection.

Tables 2.3 through 2.10 display the sampling scheme for the ethnographic and cognitive waves of the study. In each pair of tables, the first table displays the sampling scheme as planned. The second table displays the actual number of interviews successfully completed.

Table 2.3. Wave 1 Ethnographic Study Targeted Sample

Geographic Area	Housing Subsidy Program			
	Public Housing	Section 8 Tenant-Based	Section 8 Project-Based	LIHTC
Arizona	1	1	1	1
California	1	1	1	1
Florida	1	1	1	1
Georgia	1	1	1	1
Illinois	1	1	1	1
Pennsylvania	1	1	1	1
Total = 24 interviews	6 interviews (2 Hispanics, 2 African Americans, 2 Caucasians)	6 interviews (2 Hispanics, 2 African Americans, 2 Caucasians)	6 interviews (2 Hispanics, 2 African Americans, 2 Caucasians)	6 interviews (any race/ ethnicity)

Table 2.4. Wave 1 Ethnography Sample (Actual Interviews Completed)

Geographic Area	Housing Subsidy Program			
	Public Housing	Section 8 Tenant-Based	Section 8 Project-Based	LIHTC
Arizona	1	1	1	1
California	1	0	1	1
Florida	1	1	1	1
Georgia	1	0	1	1
Illinois	1	1	1	1
Pennsylvania	1	1	1	1
Total: n = 22	6	4	6	6

Table 2.5. Wave 2 Ethnographic Study Targeted Sample

Geographic Area	Housing Subsidy Program			
	Public Housing	Section 8 Tenant-Based	Section 8 Project-Based	LIHTC
Arizona	2	2	2	2
California	2	2	2	2
Florida	2	2	2	2
Georgia	2	2	2	2
Illinois	2	2	2	2
Pennsylvania	2	2	2	2
Total = 48 interviews	12 interviews (4 Hispanics, 4 African Americans, 4 Caucasians)	12 interviews (4 Hispanics, 4 African Americans, 4 Caucasians)	12 interviews (4 Hispanics, 4 African Americans, 4 Caucasians)	12 interviews (any race/ ethnicity)

Table 2.6. Wave 2 Ethnography Sample (Actual Interviews Completed)

Geographic Area	Public Housing	Section 8 Tenant-Based	Section 8 Project-Based	LIHTC
Arizona	0	0	0	0
California	2	2	0	4
Florida	2	2	6	4
Georgia	0	0	2	2
Illinois	0	2	0	1
Pennsylvania	3	2	4	0
Total: n = 38	7	8	12	11

Table 2.7. Wave 1 Cognitive Study Targeted Sample

Geographic Area	Housing Subsidy Program			
	Public Housing	Section 8 Tenant-Based	Section 8 Project-Based	LIHTC
Arizona	1	2	1	2
California	2	1	2	1
Florida	2	1	1	2
Georgia	1	2	1	2
Illinois	2	1	2	1
Pennsylvania	1	2	2	1
Total = 36 interviews	9 interviews (4 Hispanics, 4 African Americans, 1 Caucasian)	9 interviews (2 Hispanics, 3 African Americans, 4 Caucasians)	9 interviews (3 Hispanics, 2 African Americans, 4 Caucasians)	9 interviews (any race/ ethnicity)

Table 2.8. Wave 1 Cognitive Sample (Actual Interviews Completed)

Geographic Area	Public Housing	Section 8 Tenant-Based	Section 8 Project-Based	LIHTC
Arizona	1	2	1	2
California	2	0	0	1
Florida	2	0	1	2
Georgia	0	2	1	1
Illinois	2	1	2	1
Pennsylvania	1	2	2	1
Total: n = 30	8	7	7	8

Table 2.9. Wave 2 Cognitive Study Targeted Sample

Geographic Area	Housing Subsidy Program			
	Public Housing	Section 8 Tenant-Based	Section 8 Project-Based	LIHTC
Arizona	1	2	1	2
California	2	1	2	1
Florida	2	1	1	2
Georgia	1	2	1	2
Illinois	2	1	2	1
Pennsylvania	1	2	2	1
Total = 36 interviews	9 interviews (3 Hispanics, 4 African Americans, 2 Caucasians)	9 interviews (2 Hispanics, 3 African Americans, 4 Caucasians)	9 interviews (3 Hispanics, 2 African Americans, 4 Caucasians)	9 interviews (any race/ ethnicity)

Table 2.10. Wave 2 Cognitive Sample (Actual Interviews Completed)

Geographic Area	Public Housing	Section 8 Tenant-based	Section 8 Project-based	LIHTC
Arizona	0	0	0	0
California	3	1	0	0
Florida	2	1	3	3
Georgia	1	0	1	2
Illinois	0	2	3	1
Pennsylvania	1	2	2	1
Total: n = 29	8	6	9	6

Targeted Sample Size Versus Actual Sample Size

Mortality with respect to one's pool of survey respondents is a common occurrence in field research. The total combined targeted sample in the ethnographic and cognitive phases was 144. Interviews were completed with a total of 120 subsidy recipients, or slightly more than 80 percent. Ideally, the sample would have included roughly equal proportions of African Americans, Hispanics, and Caucasians. Although African Americans and Caucasians did each account for a third for those interviewed, only 15 percent of the respondents were identified as Hispanics. The race/ethnicity of the remaining 18 percent could not be verified.

Overall, collecting tenant information from the staff advisors was a major challenge and delayed the initial data collection process. Getting local PHA staff advisors to verify tenant data from sampling lists and provide updated or complete tenant contact information in a timely fashion for the interviewing was the major obstacle encountered in the data collection for both the ethnographic and cognitive study components. Although the staff advisors seemed cooperative during telephone conversations, getting them to provide information within the timeframes required for this study was difficult. These delays affected the sequencing of the ethnographic and cognitive interviews. Because of a lack of cooperation, the local PHA in Arizona was dropped entirely from the sampling frame. The deletion of the Arizona PHA, whose housing subsidy population is predominantly Hispanic, from the sampling scheme accounts at least in part for the shortfall in Hispanic respondents noted above. In addition, data collection at several other sites took much longer than planned and eventually had to be concluded with smaller sample sizes than originally intended to prevent deadlines linked to forthcoming tasks from further delay.

To compensate for the absence of the Arizona PHA, more interviews were conducted at other research sites. Where verification problems arose, ORC Macro submitted requests to HUD for additional tenant data for the remaining waves of the ethnographic and cognitive data collection efforts. These additional requests provided enough instances of verifiable subsidy status (but not necessarily race/ethnicity information) to enable interviewing to go forward without the need to consult local staff.

Similar difficulties in getting information from local PHA staff also impacted the false positive study. More details, included in Chapter 5, specifically address verifying false positive respondents' status as such.

Chapter 3. Ethnographic and Cognitive Data Collection and Analysis Strategies

Ethnographic Study Component

The objective of the ethnographic study was to provide insight into the factors that give rise to differentiation in respondents' knowledge about their respective housing subsidies. The ethnographic study was conducted in two waves, each designed to collect specific data on the housing subsidy recipients' understanding of their rental assistance. The ethnographic field interviews mapped how housing subsidy recipients conceptualized and discussed their rental assistance. This methodology identified the contextual and interpersonal characteristics that may influence interest in and knowledge of housing subsidies from the respondents' own perspectives in their own cultural settings. All interviews, however, were conducted in English because only English is used in the administration of the American Housing Survey (AHS).

The ethnographic study provided a means to focus on what aspects of the housing subsidy, if any, were perceived as particularly relevant and why. Typically, ethnographic studies rely on long-term investigation of a group through immersion in the particular group or cultural context. As such, investigations using ethnographic methods are designed to provide detailed explanation about the interactions among members of a group or cultural setting. Because of time constraints for the overall project, however, a modified ethnographic approach was used. This approach was designed to collect a snapshot of respondents' perspectives on their rental assistance through a lengthy reflective interview in which respondents acted as informants for the interviewer, providing great detail about their own understanding of their housing subsidy status.

Wave 1 provided a "mapping of the territory" of ideas and language related to housing subsidies. The goal was to gain a general understanding of how housing subsidy recipients think and talk about rent assistance with attention to the language, concepts, and features of rental assistance that respondents were able to recall and describe. Researchers were interested in the housing situations discussed and terminology used by respondents and the ordering of events that respondents recalled. The ordering of information was hypothesized to provide insight into what concepts seemed to be more or less salient to respondents in describing their housing assistance. Another objective was to determine whether tenants were likely to use common but nongovernmental language to present their knowledge of rental assistance in conversations about general housing topics.

Wave 2 was designed to further understand how subsidy recipients recalled and expressed knowledge. The objective was to develop a more structured means of assessing respondents' reactions to the key terminology emerging from Wave 1 of both the ethnographic and cognitive studies. This second wave of the study also sharpened the range of emerging concepts and memories that might be the basis of revised or new AHS questions. Wave 2 differed from Wave

1 in that the protocol was designed to ask subsidy recipients to identify whether a particular description of rental assistance best described their own experiences.

For both waves of the ethnographic work, the interview process included the following procedures:

Explanation of the study and study objectives, explicitly stating that housing benefits will not be penalized for disclosure of information.

Obtaining informed consent to audio-record the interview from the informants, including a statement about the privacy and confidentiality of informants.

Paying respondents $20 for the interview.

Presentation of one or two broad questions that provide a beginning source for discussion.

Use of the protocol as a guide, accompanied by indepth probes when respondents provide terminology, recount a particular chain of events, or indicate the sources of the knowledge on housing.

Use of a variety of inquiry approaches, with a particular focus on tools that enable the informant to tell her or his own story in her or his own words.

Self-debriefing of the field interviewer through use of a "reflective" journal to capture any information that was not captured by the audio recording or notetaking of the interview.

Note that the interview protocols did not include questions about race/ethnicity because the topics covered were believed to be of a highly sensitive nature, without the addition of additional sensitive questions on race/ethnicity. Interviewers were not asked to add queries about race/ethnicity where such information was absent from sampling lists.

Analysis of Ethnographic Data

For both waves of the ethnographic study, a key-words-in-context approach was used to analyze the data, determining the convergent themes and concepts. Using this approach, a descriptive analysis for each emerging theme was developed. It summarized the kinds of information respondents were able to recall, including the most salient interactions, recurring themes, and the kinds of language used by respondents to describe their housing situation. Frequencies for key words used by tenants to describe their rental assistance and related processes were also developed from the analysis.

Cognitive Study Component

The objective of the cognitive study was to determine the extent to which a sample of housing subsidy recipients understood key terms and concepts related to housing subsidies and the extent to which they remembered experiences that are diagnostic of housing subsidy receipt. The cognitive study used a structured methodology that gathered data regarding the specific terms, concepts, and recollections that housing subsidy recipients understand and use to communicate their own knowledge of their rental assistance.

The first wave of cognitive interviewing took place after most of the initial wave of ethnographic interviews had been completed. The second wave of cognitive interviewing took place during the completion of the later portion of the second wave of ethnographic interviewing. At each research site, the same interviewers conducted both the ethnographic and cognitive interviews. These interviewers were instructed to complete the ethnographic interviews first and then begin the cognitive interviewing with the new sample of tenants.

The cognitive study involved a more focused examination of specific terms and concepts related to housing subsidies. Like the ethnographic interviews, the field interviewers also initiated the cognitive tenant interview by explaining the study and study objectives, stating that housing benefits would not be changed based on information disclosed, obtaining informed consent, and providing a $20 incentive payment.

Beginning with Wave 1, more information was collected about memories of experiences that are diagnostic of certain kinds of housing subsidies. Although the ethnographic work provided information about the range of ideas and language that respondents spontaneously express, this study was not the best forum for exploring whether respondents understood specific concepts and terms and had specific memories. In the ethnographic work, respondents guided the conversation—the interviewer's role was to listen, keep the conversation "on topic," and ask respondents to comment on certain topics of interest. Because the ethnographic work was largely respondent-driven, the fact that a respondent did not mention a term or concept did not imply that she or he did not understand it—rather, the respondent may just have considered it unimportant. In contrast, the cognitive testing was interviewer-driven: the interviewer asked specific questions about particular concepts, terms, and memories. This process provided a basis for exploring respondents' understanding of specific concepts and terms about rent assistance.

Although the current AHS questions served as the basis of the cognitive protocols for Wave 1, additional questions were developed to probe further into findings emerging from Wave 1 of the ethnographic interviews. Subsequently, the Wave 2 cognitive protocol was also developed iteratively. The findings from Waves 1 and 2 of the ethnographic study, along with Wave 1 cognitive study findings, were used to develop this protocol. The objective of the Wave 2 cognitive study was to actually test the language and concepts respondents identified as salient in earlier waves of the study. The protocols for Wave 2 asked respondents to answer a specific question concerning their subsidy status and indicate their level of certainty or confidence in their response. After all the questions had been asked, the interviewer discussed the accuracy of the respondent's answers with that respondent and then asked the interviewee his or her own rationale for how he or she had answered the question, and to define selected key terms.

Covering all the terms, concepts, and memories in a single cognitive interview would have taken an excessive amount of time. Therefore, modules were developed for each prospective wave of the study. The total set of concepts, terms, and memories was broken into four different subsets, and different subsets were presented to different respondents. For Wave 1, question forms were created to cover different subsets of concepts, terms, and memories. Each respondent was asked the questions in one of four forms. Forms A, B, and C focused on concepts and memories, while Form D focused primarily on language. The main topics of each form and the number of respondents answering each are summarized in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1. Wave 1 Key Housing Subsidy Concepts and Their Relation to the Current AHS Questions About Housing Subsidies

Concept	Definition of Concept	Current AHS Question Requiring Understanding of Concept
Income-rent relation	Knowledge of how income is related to the individual's subsidized rent.	None
Government funding	Knowledge that government funding pays for part of the cost of subsidized housing.	3
Who owns the building	Knowledge of who owns the building in which the individual resides.	4
To whom rent is paid	Knowledge of to whom the individual pays rent.	None
Annual income reporting	Knowledge of whether rental assistance requires annual process of verification to continue to receive subsidy assistance.	1
To whom income is reported	Knowledge of to whom income is reported annually to receive a subsidy.	2
Housing choice	Knowledge of how the individual came to live in the building (that is, through choice or assignment) and understanding of the limitations on buildings in which the individual may live while receiving a given type of housing subsidy.	5
To whom applied	Knowledge of to whom the individual applied to receive housing assistance.	5

In Wave 2 of the cognitive interviewing, respondents were interviewed using one of four modules; each contained differently worded questions covering a similar range of key concepts and language. Respondents were asked to reply to the question first. After completing the interview, respondents were asked to indicate why they gave the response they selected and then specify their level of certainty in their answer. They were also asked to provide their own definitions for selected terms used in each question. In this way, the forms presented contrasting methods of ascertaining which emerging concepts, language, and memories proved to be most useful in answering questions about the basic dynamics of rental assistance (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2. Main Topics Covered in the Wave 2 Cognitive Testing Form and Number of Completed Interviews

Form	Main Topics Covered	Number of Respondents
A	Recertification to determine rent amount; economics determining rent amount; government role in paying costs of rent; housing authority building ownership; housing choice and building type, low-income housing tax credit (LIHTC).	6
B	Recertification/renewal to determine rent amount; economics determining rent amount; housing authority building ownership; government role in paying costs of rent, housing choice and building type, LIHTC.	6
C	Recertification/renewal to determine rent amount; economics determining rent amount; housing authority building ownership; housing choice and housing type, LIHTC.	9
D	Renewal to determine rent amount; economics determining rent amount; housing authority building ownership; housing choice; income reporting.	8

For both waves of the study, each cognitive testing form involved a mixture of multiple-choice and open-ended questions to examine respondents' understanding. The ability to accurately respond to questions about housing subsidies depends on conceptual understanding, understanding of language, and ability to remember events that are diagnostic of receipt of a housing subsidy. The multiple-choice questions were the primary measure of conceptual understanding. The number of questions about a concept depended on the complexity of the concept. More complex concepts had a more extensive battery of questions to measure understanding of different aspects of the concepts. In addition, respondents were asked to indicate their level of certainty in the correctness of their response ("really sure" = 3 points, "kind of sure" = 2 points, and "not sure"= 1 point). In both waves of the study, these scores were used to develop a mean certainty rating for each question in each module. The mean certainty rating served as an indication of how well a concept was understood.

The open-ended questions supplemented the multiple-choice questions and served three purposes: (1) if respondents answer a multiple-choice question incorrectly, a followup open-ended question may reveal why; (2) responses to open-ended questions provide a qualitative sense of how respondents understand a concept, which is especially important for complex concepts such as the income-rent relation; and (3) open-ended questions provide a sense of language that respondents use.

Chapter 4. Ethnographic and Cognitive Findings

Ethnographic Wave 1: Findings

This maps how the respondents talked about and thought about rental assistance using the current American Housing Survey (AHS) questions.

Concepts

Although respondents seemed to vary in understanding, they seldom expressed completely incorrect beliefs. They either expressed ideas that were partially correct or appeared to know very little about housing subsidies, but they did not espouse total misconceptions.

Respondents focused on a wide variety of concepts, but a few concepts (such as the relation between income and rent) came up frequently. Some concepts important to the AHS questions (for example, building ownership) seldom came up in the conversations. Frequently discussed concepts as well as concepts important to the AHS questions but seldom mentioned by respondents are described below.

1. Relation Between Income and Rent (Income-Rent Relation)

Five interviewees expressed a "two payer" conceptual model of rent assistance—the idea that the tenant pays part of the cost of the unit, while the government pays the remaining cost. This concept seems to be a hallmark of relatively advanced understanding; interviewees who expressed this idea also expressed knowledge of other important concepts and used advanced technical vocabulary. Note that one would need to understand the "two payer" concept to correctly answer AHS Question 3: Do you pay a lower rent because the government is paying part of the cost of the unit?

Interestingly, respondents did discuss the income-rent relation in other forms. Ten interviewees (distributed among the four housing programs) expressed the idea that their rent is related to their income, and another six seemed to understand that rent assistance lowers their rent payments or at least that their rent is relatively inexpensive.

2. Building Ownership

Although building ownership is the topic of AHS Question 4 (Is the building owned by a public housing authority?), few interviewees spontaneously commented on this topic. Apparently, who owns the building did not seem worth mentioning to most of them.

3. Housing Choice

AHS Question 5 (How did you come to live here? Did you apply to the management here, or did an agency, such as a Public Housing Authority, assign this address to you?)

is concerned with the choice of where one lives. This topic appeared salient to some interviewees—most frequently to Section 8 tenant-based recipients. Five interviewees (three Section 8 tenant-based residents, one public housing resident, and one low-income housing tax credit [LIHTC] resident) discussed this topic in detail. Some discussed the limited choices available for public housing—they said that people are assigned to buildings, and their only choice is to "take it or leave it."

Although most of the Section 8 tenant-based recipients interviewed seemed to understand housing choice and find it salient, whether most interviewees in the other programs understood the concept is unclear.

4. The Government's Role in Providing Rent Assistance

AHS Question 3 asks about the government's role in rent assistance. In their discussions of rent assistance, nine interviewees (distributed across the four housing programs) mentioned a government role in one form or another. Three discussed municipal government, four mentioned their state government, two mentioned the county government, and one replied "HUD [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development] and the federal government." The comments were divided among those focusing on the government's role in (1) building ownership, (2) funding, and (3) running/administering programs. Unlike the other concepts mentioned above, about which interviewees seemed certain, comments about the government often seemed to be guesswork; the interviewees often admitted they were unsure about this topic. They usually thought the government had a role in rent assistance but were unsure of exactly how.

Language

In connection with improving current AHS questions, identifying the kind of language housing subsidy recipients use to talk about rent assistance was important.

1. Terminology Used To Describe Rent Assistance

The terms most often used were variants of the official housing terminology rather than original slang. The exceptions were mostly derogatory terms, such as "row house," "welfare house," "people-that-don't-want-to-work housing," and "lower man's income." Among the more common informal terms used were variants of "low-income housing," "government help," and "government housing." Some terms that one might expect to be common were seldom mentioned (for example, "public housing," "the projects," and "vouchers").

By far, the most frequently mentioned term was "Section 8." Ten interviewees, representing all four housing programs, mentioned some variant of "Section 8." Six interviewees (three Section 8 project-based, two LIHTC, and one public-housing-based) mentioned some variant of "HUD," in which "HUD" was used to refer to a type of subsidy, not an organization. In addition to "HUD," other organization names sometimes seemed to be used to refer to types of housing assistance, such as "New Orleans Housing Authority," "Housing Authority," and "NYCHA," used by one interviewee each. Five interviewees mentioned variants of "low-income housing," such as "low-income housing help," "low housing," or "low income." Three interviewees mentioned terms

including "government," such as "government homes," "government housing," and "government assistance."

2. Terminology Used for Organizations That Provide Rent Assistance

In addition to the terms that individuals used to refer to rent assistance, knowing how they refer to organizations that run rent assistance programs is also useful—three of the current AHS questions refer to organizations that run housing assistance programs. Determining whether housing subsidy recipients themselves use these terms or whether they tend to use other terms is important.

The most common terms for housing organizations were simply "the office" (two Section 8 project-based, one public housing, one LIHTC) or some variant of "Section 8"—that is, "Section 8 office," "Section 8 center," or just "Section 8" (two Section 8 tenant-based respondents, one public housing respondent, and one LIHTC respondent).

A variant of "housing" ("the local housing" or just "housing") was used by three interviewees (two public housing respondents, one voucher respondent), and "housing authority" was used by two respondents (one Section 8 project-based resident, one LIHTC resident). Several interviewees referred to specific housing offices—for example, "Zenith Housing Authority" (two respondents) and "Housing Resource Center," "Green County Housing," "Metro Housing Authority," "ZHA," and "Estate Commons Office" (each mentioned by one interviewee).

Note that although "Public Housing Authority" is used in several AHS questions, no interviewee ever used this term, and only four interviewees mentioned "housing authority" in any form (either in general or in reference to a specific housing authority).

3. Terminology Referencing Staff in Organizations That Provide Rent Assistance

The current AHS Question 6 asks about "a building manager or landlord." Thus, knowing what terms interviewees themselves use to refer to individuals who own, manage, or run assisted housing is of interest.

When answering this question, an unusually large number of respondents (that is, ten, representing all four housing subsidy groups) mentioned a person's proper name or some variant of "manager" or "management." In their discussions of their housing search, Section 8 tenant-based and LIHTC informants used the term "caseworker"; however, when discussing their relationship with the property, these same respondents tended to use the words "*landlord*" or "*manager*."

Salient Memories and Distinctive Recollections

AHS Question 5 asks respondents to recall events that occurred when they applied for assistance, and AHS Questions 1 and 2 could be construed as relevant to initial application as well as annual recertification. If such questions are going to be used to classify respondents' housing subsidy status, determining how often individuals remember the events about which they are being asked is important. Unfortunately, the memories that some interviewees mentioned are largely subjective (for example, some people might even describe a 1-month wait as "a long time"), and the remembered experiences could apply to the nonassisted rental application process and the process of applying for rental assistance.

1. Recall of the Waiting Process To Receive Housing

The memory of application that was most often mentioned (by seven interviewees representing all housing programs) is being on a waiting list or having to wait a very long time to get into assisted housing.

2. Certification, Inspection, and Rent Renewal Processes

Other memories mentioned by at least four of the interviewees are inspection of the unit (two LIHTC residents and two Section 8 tenant-based recipients) and that an application interview occurred (one public housing resident, two Section 8 tenant-based recipients, and two LIHTC residents). Section 8 tenant-based recipients were able to recall applying at the housing authority and could describe either the recertification and inspection process or their initial search and inspection process for receiving rental assistance.

In talking about information they provided at application or recertification, five interviewees (representing all programs) said they reported income, two mentioned reporting household composition (one public housing, one LIHTC), two mentioned reporting birth certificates or birthdates (one public housing, one LIHTC), two reported bank account information (one public housing, one LIHTC), and two mentioned criminal background checks (one Section 8 project-based, one LIHTC). Other reported items mentioned by one respondent each include Social Security number, Social Security statement, just "Social Security," tax forms, "rent receipt," utility bills, "receipts," medical bills, prescriptions, electric bills, and credit reports. The information that is most often mentioned (that is, income), however, is also sometimes requested for nonassisted rental applications.

Ethnography Wave 2: Findings

Respondents' Knowledge of Their Rent Assistance

In Wave 2 of the study, respondents were first asked to briefly describe their rental assistance by answering the following question, "According to our records, you receive rent assistance. 'Rent assistance' means that you pay a lower rent than most other people in your neighborhood who don't receive rent assistance. Tell me about the kind of rent assistance you receive—be as detailed as possible." Based on the answers to this question, the following areas emerged as key themes for understanding rental assistance.

1. Aspects of the Housing Acquisition Process That Respondents Recall: Search, Application, and Description of Why They Qualify

Public Housing Respondents

In response to the question, "Tell me about the kind of rent assistance you receive," five of the seven public housing residents correctly identified the type of housing they live in. Most respondents could describe in detail the process they went through to obtain housing. They provided specific details about the process, in many cases referring to the actual name of the housing authority or the address of the place where they submitted their applications.

Section 8 Project-Based Respondents

Of the 12 Section 8 project-based housing respondents, 8 indicated they knew they lived in Section 8 project-based housing. Only 3 of the 12 respondents, however, mentioned

"Section 8" by name. Sixty-seven percent (8 of 12) stated that their housing was based on 30 percent of their income and that their housing was a "HUD building" or a "HUD Section 8." Two respondents said they did not know what type of housing they lived in, while one respondent simply stated that it was "low-income housing."

Section 8 Tenant-Based Respondents

All the Section 8 tenant-based respondents were able to provide some description of how they would begin the process of obtaining rental assistance. All respondents described the processes of completing an application, applying for a number, and waiting for the housing authority to contact the respondent in some fashion. Half the respondents provided descriptions of the criteria they believed qualified them for their rental assistance: disability, low income, and lack of a job. Most respondents provided descriptions of how they located their housing. Note that all eight Section 8 tenant-based respondents in Wave 2 of the ethnography study were able to provide some basic information about their rental assistance in terms of the economics impacting their subsidies. Each respondent communicated they paid a portion of the rent, while their subsidy covered the remaining portion. Half the Section 8 tenant-based respondents clearly indicated that their rental amount was determined by their income. These four respondents were also able to indicate that an increase or decrease in their income corresponded with a reverse change in rental amount covered by their subsidy.

LIHTC Respondents

LIHTC respondents tend to not view themselves as receiving rental assistance. Only one of six identified himself as benefiting from LIHTC. The remaining respondents indicated they did not receive rental assistance, which was described as assistance for "low-income people."

2. Words Used by Housing Subsidy Recipients To Describe Their Own Assistance

Public Housing Respondents

As with Wave 1, the actual words "public housing" were not used frequently by public housing recipients. When asked what words they used to refer to the type of assistance they received, *none* of the respondents used the term "public housing." "Low income" was the terminology used most often, with three combinations of words (low income, income-based rent, and low-income assistance) including the words "low" and "income."

Section 8 Project-Based Respondents

Section 8 project-based recipients used a wide range of terminology to describe their own housing subsidy. Notably, the words "Section 8" were only used four times. The term "low income" was also part of respondents' descriptions four times. Three respondents used the term "subsidized housing," "subsidized by HUD," or "government subsidized" to refer to Section 8 housing.

Section 8 Tenant-Based Respondents

In most cases, the terminology used by these respondents to describe their own rental assistance did not reference the voucher aspect of the Section 8 tenant-based program. All eight respondents, however, used the words "Section 8" to describe their rental assistance.

LIHTC Respondents

Most LIHTC respondents could suggest no words to describe their own housing, perhaps in part because they do not identify with the words or concept of "rental assistance" in thinking about their own housing.

Cognitive Wave 1: Findings

Concepts

Certainty Ratings

For selected questions about each concept, respondents were asked how sure they were of their answers. Respondents might give a correct answer while being unsure of the answer. This response indicates that a concept is weakly understood or grasped. These responses were used as the basis for calculating a "mean certainty rating" for each concept. The percentage of respondents who understood each concept and the corresponding mean certainty ratings are shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1. Wave 1 Percentage of Respondents Who Understood Each Housing Subsidy Concept and the Mean Certainty Rating for Answers to Questions About the Concept

Concept	Percentage of Respondents Who Understood the Concept (%)	Mean Certainty Rating (3 = "really sure" to 1 = "not so sure")
Annual income reporting	100	3.0
Income-rent relation	100	2.7
Government funding	100	2.4
Who owns the building	100	1.9
To whom rent is paid	86	2.9
To whom income is reported	71	3.0
Housing choice	67	2.1
To whom applied	44	3.0

With one exception (to whom applied for assistance), all concepts were correctly understood by at least two-thirds of respondents, and four concepts (annual income reporting, income-rent relation, government funding, and who owns the building) seemed to be understood by all respondents.

Certainty ratings may be seen to reveal other aspects of conceptual understanding. Some of the more noteworthy findings are the following:

Although all respondents correctly identified the owner of their building, their certainty ratings indicate relative uncertainty about this answer (mean = 1.9, between "kind of sure" and "not so sure"). In some sense, the concept may be weaker than the other three concepts that every respondent understood. Perhaps respondents believed that several of the available options might be correct, or perhaps they were never explicitly told who owns the building but they inferred it based on to whom they pay rent or other evidence.

In some cases, respondents tended to be quite certain of incorrect responses. This finding is most clear in the case of to whom they applied. Three respondents providing incorrect answers for their subsidy type said they were "really sure" they applied to a

"Section 8 office." Three is a small number of respondents but too many to be dismissed as a fluke or idiosyncrasy. A number of individuals seemed quite sure that "Section 8 office" is the right label for the agency to which they applied, and they favored this label over "Public Housing Authority," "state or local housing agency," and "building manager or landlord." Once again, perhaps these respondents had the correct agency in mind but favored a nonconventional label for that agency.

Respondents were asked whether they had "ever heard of" each term (for example, "have you ever heard of 'Section 8'?"). Respondents who had heard of the term were asked to define it and then were asked how certain they were of their definition. The percentage of respondents who had heard of the term and mean certainty ratings are shown in Table 4.2. Definitions of terms were coded into categories—that is, similar definitions were grouped together. Common definitions are shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2. Wave 1 Percentage of Respondents Who Had Heard of Terms and, for All Respondents, the Mean Certainty Rating for the Definitions Provided

Term	Percentage of Respondents Who Have Heard Term (%)	Mean Certainty of Definition Among Those Who Defined the Term (3 = "really sure" to 1 = "not so sure")
"HUD"	100	2.9
"low-income housing"	100	2.9
"subsidized"	100	2.9
"the projects"	100	2.6
"Section 8"	100	2.4
"public housing"	100	2.3
"government housing"	86	2.5
"Public Housing Authority"	71	2.4
"housing vouchers"	57	2.8
"Low-income housing tax credit"	57	2.3
"Section 8 office"	43	2.3
"Conventional housing"	29	2.0
"Housing choice voucher program"	14	2.0
"LIHTC"	14	1.0

Salient Memories and Respondent Recollections

As with the ethnographic study, perhaps respondents can recall specific memories of process or events they underwent to remain eligible to receive a housing subsidy, events that those who do not receive a subsidy would not be able to recall or identify. The usefulness of these events for

diagnosing housing subsidy status, however, depends on individuals' ability to remember them. To examine the memories of specific housing-related events that respondents may have had, respondents were asked to describe everything they could remember about (1) the last annual recertification and (2) the initial application for assistance.

Memories of the Last Annual Recertification

Annual recertification is more recent than initial application for people who applied a year or more ago. Thus, respondents should remember annual recertification better than they remember initial application.

Compared with their description of with whom they made the initial application, respondents were more often correct in their descriptions of with whom they did the annual recertification. They tended to be more specific in naming the person or organization with whom they did the last recertification, and none said they did not know with whom they did the process. This finding is consistent with the possibility that they remember the last recertification more clearly than initial application.

The research team also examined what was remembered about the process. For recertification, all seven respondents remembered reporting income or being asked to provide documentation of income, and six of seven remembered being asked to provide an identification card or other proof or information about household composition. No other frequent memories of annual recertification were reported.

Terminology

Some rent assistance terminology that housing subsidy recipients understand and use was determined—for example, "housing authority" (rather than "Public Housing Authority") and "housing voucher." Equally important, certain terminology should not be used when querying individuals about their housing subsidy status—terms that housing subsidy recipients do not understand and seldom use themselves or ones they fail to distinguish from other terms—for example, "Section 8," "public housing," and "Housing Choice Voucher Program".

Cognitive Wave 2: Findings

Based on the findings from Wave 1, most concepts in Wave 2 were slightly modified, but others were eliminated completely (see Table 4.3). These modifications reflected respondents' understanding of the concepts and the relative saliency of them in answering questions about rental assistance. Wave 2 concepts included the following:

Annual income verification. Knowledge that one must report income annually to receive a housing subsidy.

Income-rent economic relationships. Knowledge that an increase in income leads to an increase in rent.

Government funding. Knowledge that the rent is lower/affordable because the government pays/contributes to the costs of the apartment.

Building ownership. Knowledge of who owns the building: a housing authority, the Section 8 status of the building, or receipt of LIHTC by the building owner.

To whom income is reported. Knowledge of to whom income is reported to continue to receive rental assistance.

Housing choice. Knowledge of whether the individual searched for his or her own housing using a voucher or whether he or she was assigned to an apartment or building.

Table 4.3. Wave 2 Revised Definitions of Key Housing Subsidy Concepts About Housing Subsidies

Concept	Current AHS Question Requiring Understanding of Concept	Initial Definition of Concept (Used in Wave 1)	Revised Definition of Concept Based on Wave 1 Analysis (Used in Wave 2)
Income-rent relation	None	Knowledge of how income is related to the individual's subsidized rent.	Knowledge that an increase in income leads to increase in rent.
Government funding	3	Knowledge that government funding pays for part of the cost of subsidized housing.	Knowledge that the rent is lower/affordable because the government pays/contributes to the costs of the apartment.
Who owns the building	4	Knowledge of who owns the building in which the individual resides.	Knowledge of who owns the building: a housing authority, the Section 8 status of the building, or receipt of LIHTC by the building owner.
To whom rent is paid	None	Knowledge of to whom the individual pays rent.	Not used.
Annual income reporting	1	Knowledge of whether rental assistance requires annual process of verification to continue to receive subsidy assistance.	Knowledge that one must report income to continue to receive a housing subsidy.
To whom income is reported	2	Knowledge of to whom income is reported annually to receive a subsidy.	Knowledge of to whom income is reported annually to receive a subsidy (no modifications made).
Housing choice	5	Knowledge of how the individual came to live in the building (that is, through choice or assignment) and understanding of the limitations on buildings in which the individual may live while receiving a given type of housing subsidy.	Knowledge of whether individual searched for his/her own housing using a voucher or whether he/she was assigned to an apartment or building.
To whom applied	5	Knowledge of to whom the individual applied to receive housing assistance.	Not used.

Concepts

Table 4.4. Wave 2 Percentage of Respondents Who Understood Each Housing Subsidy Concept and the Mean Certainty Rating for Answers to Questions About the Concept

Concept	Percentage of Respondents Who Understood the Concept (Based on Those Who Correctly Answered the Question) (%)	Mean Certainty Rating (3 = "really sure" to 1 = "not so sure")
Annual income verification/reporting	90	2.9
Income-rent economic relationships	91	2.7
Government funding of rental unit	62	2.5
Building ownership	62	2.1
Housing authority	86	2.2
Section 8	71	2.5
LIHTC	2	1.7
To whom income is reported	50	2.8
Housing choice	93	2.8
Receive a voucher	97	2.7
Housing authority assigns address	90	2.9

In Table 4.4, the mean certainty calculations present some interesting findings when compared to the percentage of respondents who correctly understood the selected rental assistance concepts. A high percentage of respondents correctly answered the question on annual income verification/reporting, and they are certain of their answer, as the high mean certainty rating indicates. This finding suggests that respondents generally understand questions on this concept. The same can be said for the relationship between income and rent, and housing choice overall.

Notably, a high percentage of respondents correctly answered whether the housing authority owns their apartment building/housing, but the mean certainty rating is the lowest except for the one calculated for knowledge of LIHTC. This suggests that respondents may have guessed the correct answer or supplied the correct answer based on other contextual events in the interview. In some sense, the concept seems to be weaker, one that respondents do not seem to understand as well.

The findings in Table 4.4 also indicate that respondents have a relatively weak understanding of the government's role in paying the costs of their rental unit. Note that only 62 percent of the respondents correctly answered this question. The mean certainty rating calculated for this concept, while not the lowest, is lower than the rating for the concepts of recertification, housing choice, and the income-rent relationship. This finding is notable because the current AHS questionnaire asks respondents whether they pay a lower rent because the government is paying part of the cost of the unit.

The analysis of Wave 2 data generated the following findings about the saliency of specific concepts to respondents.

1. Annual Income Verification/Reporting: Knowledge of Whether Rental Assistance Requires Annual Process of Verification To Continue To Receive Subsidy Assistance

Most respondents were able to correctly answer the question for their specific type of housing subsidy, but some difference existed in what recertification was understood to be. Some respondents understood recertification to include the process of having their income reviewed, while Section 8 tenant-based residents understood recertification as the annual inspection period of their apartment. Some LIHTC respondents thought they went through the recertification process because they received a letter instructing them to verify their lease.

2. Income-Rent Economic Relationships: Knowledge of How Income Is Related to the Amount of Rent Paid

Most respondents recalled that their rent was based on the amount of their income. Respondents generally indicated that if their income increased, their rent would increase. Section 8 tenant- and project-based residents often explained that, as a rule, their rent is a fixed percentage of income, as did some LIHTC residents. A few respondents were not able to provide any more detail for their answer because they simply indicated that it was "the rules" of their apartment complex.

3. Government Funding. Knowledge That the Government Pays for a Portion of the Costs of the Subsidized Housing

Some evidence suggests that respondents have a weak conceptual understanding of the government's role in paying part of the costs for their housing. Of those respondents who indicated they did not believe the government paid a portion of their housing costs, almost half were public housing residents. Respondents tended to express some confusion over what the term "government" meant: some interpreted it to mean their local housing authority, while others thought the question was asking about the federal government. A notable number of respondents asked for clarification on the kind of government being referenced. Many did not make the connection, however, between their housing subsidy and the federal government. For example, respondents who indicated that the government did not pay their housing costs indicated that the housing authority or HUD paid for their housing. Other areas of misunderstanding existed. In some cases, respondents who received income from the federal government answered the question affirmatively. For example, some respondents indicated that their Social Security income, which came from the government, paid for their housing; thus they believe the government did pay for the costs of their rent. Although these respondents answered the question correctly, their answers were not based on knowledge that the government subsidizes the cost of their apartment; rather, their answers were based on the sources of their income.

4. Building Ownership: Knowledge of Who Owns the Building the Resident Resides in and Other Specific Conditions Impacting the Building Ownership (Potentially Diagnostic of the Type of Rental Assistance the Respondent Is Receiving)

a. Section 8 as a Concept: Living in a "Section 8 Building" (Section 8 project-based building)

Some Section 8 tenant-based respondents indicated they believed they do live in a "Section 8 building" because Section 8 helped them obtain their housing. Respondents who answer the question incorrectly in this fashion do not make the distinction between the private ownership of their building and the building's acceptance of their Section 8 tenant-based vouchers. Rather, because the building accepts "Section 8 vouchers," they view the property as a "Section 8 building."

b. Building Ownership as a Way of Identifying the Kind of Subsidy Received

Respondents' conceptual understanding of building ownership was based on a connection between either to whom respondents paid their rent or the identification of the property as privately owned and having a name that suggested private ownership or management. For example, many respondents supplied the name of the company managing the property where they resided as a way of indicating they understood that their building was not a housing authority. For those respondents who answered that a housing authority owns the building they live in, a specific interaction or discussion was the conceptual basis of reference. Respondents indicated that the housing authority received their rent checks every month or they had to travel to the housing authority in person to make payments; therefore, a housing authority owned their building. LIHTC respondents did not associate choice or self-searching with a housing authority in explaining their answers.

c. Building Owners Receiving LIHTC

Predictably, few respondents were able to describe LIHTC in their own words. Respondents were generally "not so sure" or "kind of sure" about their responses as well, a marked decrease in confidence in answers from the rest of the questions that were asked. Respondents who did not reply "don't know" tended to provide a guess about the meaning of the words "low-income housing tax credit" that centered on the apartment building owners receiving some sort of tax reduction for offering low-income housing.

5. Housing Choice: Knowledge of Whether an Individual Came To Live in the Building by Choice, Primarily With a Voucher, or Lives in Housing That Was Assigned to Them

a. Understanding a Housing Voucher and Its Provision of Housing Choice

Most respondents were able to provide correct answers, based on their rental subsidy type, to questions asking them if they received a housing voucher, regardless of the wording. Respondents either knew what a housing voucher was and could say they did or did not have one, or they had never heard of a voucher that provided housing choice and, therefore, concluded they did not have one. In particular, Section 8 tenant-based respondents described their building as one that participated in Section 8, knew that the amount of the voucher was based on income, and understood that the voucher amount can change as income changes. In answering the question, some respondents simply had never heard of a voucher and based their answers on this lack of knowledge, concluding they did not have a voucher. Note that some respondents seemed to focus on whether they believed they had a housing voucher rather than on the voucher's function in providing housing choice.

b. Housing Authority Assigning an Address

Most respondents were able to correctly answer these questions, regardless of wording, based on their housing type. For most respondents, "assign" was understood to mean someone else choosing a place for an individual or being assigned a certain building or address by the housing authority. Notably, the respondents' search process in locating housing provided the basis for answering questions on whether the housing authority assigned an address to the household. These recollections were salient for individuals and were ones that most respondents could recall with seemingly little effort. Public housing residents clearly recalled having little choice in selecting their housing, while, for the most part, Section 8 project-based recipients indicated that the housing authority had not assigned them to their apartments. Section 8 tenant-based recipients provided descriptions of their search process, contrasting it with being placed in housing selected by the housing authority.

Some notable wording difficulties and distinctions exist, however, in the conceptual understanding that emerges. For Section 8 tenant-based residents, the housing authority's role in providing a referral list of properties was understood as being assigned to a building, primarily because the housing authority listing or referral narrowed the scope of potential housing choices. These respondents believed that the housing authority was making them choose between limited options because the housing authority had chosen the properties for the respondent to initially select housing from.

Language

In this wave of the cognitive study, respondents were asked to supply their own definitions of key terminology used in describing rental assistance. The words that respondents were asked to define included more specific rental assistance terminology, such as low-income tax credit, Section 8, and recertification, and general terms used in discussions of rental assistance, such as government, income, affordable housing, and assign. Evidence from the first wave of the cognitive study and the ethnography clearly illustrates that subsidy recipients have extremely disparate understandings of some important terminology commonly used in asking questions about their rental assistance, terminology that is used in the current AHS questions. This wave of the cognitive analysis focused even more attention on ascertaining the range of meaning respondents give to terminology that describes the processes involved in obtaining and maintaining rental assistance as well as those words used to describe the defining characteristics of different subsidy programs. The examination of seemingly commonplace terminology also reveals areas where a respondent's misunderstanding can lead to erroneous answers to questions.

Respondents' Understanding of Common Terms Used in Asking Questions About Their Housing Subsidy

The following section presents the key words that respondents were asked to define in their own language and the emerging definitions for each word.

affordable housing

Affordable housing was primarily defined in two ways. Some respondents indicated that affordable housing is what they or most other people can afford to pay for, based on their income. Other respondents defined affordable housing as a specific type of housing where someone else provides assistance in covering the costs of housing for low-income people.

assign
For some respondents, "assign" was defined as the housing authority telling a person which housing to go to, while other respondents, specifically those in public housing, indicated that "assign" meant that the housing authority specifically choose the apartment or address where they were going to live. Note that for some Section 8 project-based respondents, "assign" had a broader meaning—that the housing authority had provided a listing of properties to begin searching for housing, or had indicated that only two or three properties had openings. In some cases, respondents believed that their choices were constrained by such recommendations.

building manager
Respondents provided two alternative definitions for this word—either the person who owns the property and collects the rent or the person who is responsible for maintenance concerns and keeping the property functioning.

certificate
About half of those asked provided a general definition for certificate, understanding it to be a reward one receives for doing a good job. Among the remaining respondents, most defined it as government assistance with no specific references to housing choice (for example, a voucher for food or clothing), while a few indicated that a certificate was a benefit that provided flexibility in where a person could live and paid for the rent.

government
This word evoked a variety of definitions, some more abstract than others. Most respondents understood government to mean the federal government. Respondents do not seem to make a connection, however, between the federal government and their local housing. One respondent defined government as the source of help for low-income people. Many respondents indicated that improvements in the questions could help explain the level of government being referred t—federal, state, or local.

household
Respondents expressed two understandings of the word "household." For most respondents, household was defined as people living together in the same house or all the members of a family living in the apartment. Some respondents' definition of household included the apartment as a physical location, however, as well as the number of people residing there.

housing authority
Some degree of ambiguity exists about what a housing authority really is. Some respondents identified a "housing authority" as the agency that provides help in finding housing for low-income people, while others defined it as a set of counselors that help a person find resources, with no mention of low-income housing. Some Section 8 tenant-based respondents described the housing authority as the entity with authority over their housing and the supplier of the "Section 8 voucher." Other respondents described the housing authority as subsidized affordable housing or "a place that pays your rent when you are low income." Some described the housing authority as a company that managed the rent, however, while others understood the housing authority to be the government or HUD.

HUD
HUD was most often described as low-income housing, the housing authority, the federal government, or a low-income housing company. Some respondents simply did not know what HUD is.

income
The Wave 2 cognitive study participants presented two explanations of the word "income." Most respondents across all modules of the testing indicated that income included any source of money to cover their expenses, such as Supplemental Security Income, food stamps, and unemployment benefits. About one-third of the respondents, however, described income more generally as money they received or money they used to pay their monthly bills.

landlord
Interviewees presented overlapping definitions of the terms "landlord" and "property management." Respondents generally defined landlord in one of two ways—as either the actual owner of the property or the person in charge of the property and of collecting the rent.

low-income tax credit
A low-income tax credit was defined as "deductions from income tax," "kickback," or tax cut received by all property managers or landlords for offering low-income housing in general. Note that most respondents, including LIHTC participants, indicated they were not sure about their answers or did not know.

property management
The "property management company" was defined as those who either own the building or are responsible for maintaining the property as caretakers for the owner. In some cases, respondents provided the actual names of the property management company.

Public Housing Authority
Respondents defined this as an organization, not run by the government, that provides rent assistance for low-income people. Other respondents described it as an agency for the public, affiliated with the government, that provides help to low-income people.

Section 8
As with Wave 1 of the study, respondents provided various generalized definitions of what they believe Section 8 to mean. Section 8 was generally defined as housing for low-income people or another form of rent assistance. Note that some respondents simply had never heard of Section 8, or mistakenly thought the program was called Section "A" housing.

recertification
For most respondents, "recertification" was understood to mean the process of verifying one's eligibility to remain in housing. Many respondents defined recertification as the need to maintain financial "legality" to remain in their housing, while a few specifically mentioned that recertification was reviewing one's income and determining the amount of rent. For most Section 8 tenant-based respondents, however, recertification had a different meaning—the process of having their housing inspected annually.

renewal
Many respondents indicated that "renewal" is the actual new lease on their apartment, while others believed that renewal and recertification refer to the same thing. Some defined a renewal as the process of having their income reviewed. There was no clear distinction by subsidy type among those supplying any of these answers.

rental agreement
Most respondents understood a rental agreement to be the lease for their apartment, including the dollar amount of rent to be paid. Respondents focused on the idea that a

rental agreement obligated them to pay either the landlord or the "Section 8 people" a certain amount of money for their apartment. One respondent defined a rental agreement as a process of documenting one's income, checking to see if it went up or down, while another resident defined "rental agreement" in reference to monthly obligations to pay rent.

voucher

Respondents focused on the idea of choice in communicating their understanding of what a voucher is. A "voucher" was defined as a piece of paper that gives a person flexibility in finding housing. Interestingly, many respondents simply did not know what a voucher was and determined they did not have one based on their lack of knowledge.

Salient Memories and Respondent Recollections

Wave 2 analysis of the cognitive recollections and memories reinforced the findings from the ethnographic component of the research. Certain memories proved to be extremely salient for respondents, serving as a frame of reference for identifying the specific concept or transaction being asked about.

Key Recollections That Respondents Used in Determining Answers to Questions About Their Rental Assistance

Housing Search Process

The housing search process was a source of salient memories that enabled respondents to correctly answer questions about their rental assistance. Respondents repeatedly relied on their recollection of their housing search process to answer questions about building ownership (is the building owned by the housing authority?) and how they came to reside in the building (whether housing was assigned to them).

The respondents' search process in locating housing provided the basis for answering questions on whether the housing authority assigned an address to the household. Many respondents who indicated that a housing authority did not assign them their address said they found the place on their own using either a list supplied by the housing authority or a newspaper. Others highlighted their ability to look for housing themselves. In regards to answering whether a housing authority owned their building, about one-fourth of the respondents recalled aspects of their housing search process in answering the question.

Recollection of Specific Cues and Routine Processes in Determining Responses

For many respondents, recalling a specific piece of documentation, such as a lease, or recounting a conversation with building ownership informed the answers provided in response to questions about recertification and renewal, building ownership, and the relationship between income and rent amount. For example, many respondents recalled making an appointment with their landlord or Public Housing Authority staff for the recertification process, which is how they determined that the event was one they had to undergo. Other respondents recalled receiving a letter instructing residents that it was time for their annual recertification process, or they received a checklist of documentation to bring to their recertification appointment. Many described the process of receiving a letter or notice, collecting their income information, and going through a process in which income was verified.

Regarding questions on building ownership (is the building Section 8, who owns the building), respondents used recollections of the physical name of the property (for

example, "Brownstone Management Company") or a conversation they had had with the landlord or property management company in supplying their answers. For example, respondents recalled that their building was privately owned because the lease or manager had said so, or a sign located on the property identified it as a privately owned building run by a property management company. Others used to whom they made their rent checks out as the cue for determining who owned the building. Specifically, public housing residents recalled that their checks were made out to their local housing authority; therefore, the housing authority must own the building. Notably, regarding the question on the relationship between rent amount and income, many respondents recalled that their lease specified that their rent would increase if their income did. Note that the understanding of housing choice, whether respondents had the ability to look for their housing, was very clearly recalled as a means to reply to questions about building ownership and housing choice as well.

Economic Relationships: Relationship Between Income and Rent Amount

The relationship between an increase in income and an increase in rent was an important memory in assisting respondents to answer questions about their rent. Respondents recalled the outcomes of a change in their income, stating they had experienced rent increases in the past because of the change in income.

Chapter 5. The False Positive Study

Introduction

A false positive respondent is an individual who reports receiving a housing subsidy and has an income level that would qualify him or her to receive a housing subsidy, but program records indicate that the individual does not receive such a subsidy. The objective of the false positive study was to ask false positive respondents questions about their housing status to better understand why they misidentify themselves as receiving a housing subsidy. To accomplish this objective, however, it was necessary to initiate a process of identifying income-eligible respondents and giving them an opportunity to misidentify themselves as false positives.

Methodological Approach

Originally, the false positive study was to be conducted using data from either the U.S. Census Bureau or academic sources. In the early stages of the original contract, however, the ORC Macro project team encountered serious obstacles in attempts to identify an existing sample of false positives. The possibility of identifying false positives by matching American Housing Survey (AHS) data with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD's) records was first explored. This proved unworkable because the Census Bureau, which collects the AHS data, will not release individually identifying information about respondents because of confidentiality concerns. Next, attempts were made to obtain data from welfare surveys that include questions about housing subsidies. This also proved infeasible, primarily because of confidentiality concerns.

In response to the lack of available false positive data, the false positive component was reconceptualized as a separate but related phase of the *Improving Housing Subsidy Surveys: Data Collection Techniques for Identifying the Housing Subsidy Status of Survey Respondents* project. This redesign effort led to a modification of the original study to now include a new data collection phase. With neither the actual AHS "false positives" nor lists of persons who had already responded to a housing subsidy study, the false positive study was of necessity designed to identify false positives by asking low-income persons questions about their housing subsidy status and thus giving them the opportunity to incorrectly report that they receive a housing subsidy when they do not.

The false positive study used the existing AHS questions and a set of revised questions from the second wave of the cognitive study developed with known housing subsidy recipients. The current AHS questions were used in the telephone screener phase of the false positive study to identify a population of suspected false positive respondents. The "screener" questionnaire took 5 minutes to complete and also included a request for the last four digits of the respondent's Social Security number (SSN). The SSN data was collected to assist in better identifying actual subsidy recipients in subsequent checks of HUD's administrative databases.

Drawing from the earlier ethnographic and cognitive phases of the original study, revised questions were used in a cognitive interview with identified false positive respondents. The false positive study used these revised questions with a sample of the "newly minted" false positives in an effort to identify ways of improving housing subsidy survey questions to obtain more accurate responses than those produced by the current AHS questions.

The false positive study was conducted in three of the six geographic regions used in the other components of the study—California, Florida, and Pennsylvania—to ensure that a sufficient pool of geographically diverse suspected false positives was available. Only three locations, rather than a larger number, were selected because high fixed costs were associated with each additional location and highly qualified local field interviewers for the cognitive interview phase were available for each of these areas. The field interviewers had experience conducting indepth cognitive interviews with low-income populations and also were prepared to canvas for income-eligible individuals by using local contact networks, a contingency plan to be used for the screener phase if the random digit dialing (RDD) was not successful.

Sampling

To investigate the reasons why respondents report false positives, it was deemed necessary to obtain a sample size that would be amenable to statistical analysis. Thus, the decision was made to conduct at least 15 interviews. These 15 false positives had to be located and had to agree to be interviewed. Assuming a 20-percent interview refusal rate for the "newly minted" false positive respondents, an effort was made to obtain a pool of 18 interviewees from which 15 were projected to agree to participate.

Very little is known about the distribution of false positives in the general population, and little empirical research exists on the topic. Using known AHS overestimates of HUD subsidy recipients, ORC Macro staff estimated that potential respondents in slightly less than 1 percent of income-eligible households nationwide were likely to report as false positive. That estimate supported the reasonable likelihood of obtaining enough false positives (that is, 18) for a meaningful statistical analysis from a random sample of 2,520 households. Budgetary considerations led to a decision to limit the number of completed screening interviews to a maximum of 800. Given the paucity of the information on the false positive phenomenon, the outcome of the search for this type of respondent could not be predicted.

Of these 800 screening interviews, the RDD was to account for 590 completed interviews, while the remaining 210 screeners were to be completed through in-person canvassing and interviewing. RDD was seen as much more cost-effective, but concerns arose about whether the requisite number of false positives could be obtained from these "cold calls." Thus, as a backup strategy, in case too few potential false positives were discovered, in-person interviews were to be arranged by networking with community organizations and social service agencies in low-income neighborhoods. A hypothesis was made that these personal interviews might have a higher probability of success. In the end, however, the RDD approach worked exceptionally well and the networking approach was not required.

ORC Macro purchased residential listings for use in the screener RDD phase of the data collection. Because data collection was to occur in California, Florida, and Pennsylvania, listings were obtained for a city in each of these three states. A total of 2,520 listings were purchased from a commercial vendor (840 in each of the three respective cities).

Listings for the three cities were obtained by the following method:

Census tracts were identified for each city.

For each census tract, the median income was determined and reviewed.

Census tracts that had a median household income of $25,000 or less were retained. The $25,000 level was selected because preliminary research indicated that this level was the lowest median household income that would provide a sufficiently large pool of potential respondents in each of the three areas selected for data collection.

In each of the three targeted areas, all listings with complete addresses were obtained for census tracts that had a median income of $25,000 or less.

In each respective area, 840 listings were randomly selected by the vendor using the above criteria.

Results From the Screening Interview

Table 5.1 summarizes the level of success in reaching and interviewing individuals. A total of 2,520 leads were pursued. Note that a combination of factors, including execution costs, timeline, and budget constraints, prohibited additional followup on the 739 cases that have the final disposition of "other." The table shows that language barriers existed in 244 cases: 215 in California, 10 in Pennsylvania, and 19 in Florida. The large number of language barriers in California resulted in a reduced number of respondents that could be pursued in the cognitive phase as compared to Pennsylvania and Florida.

Table 5.1. Results of the Screener Phase of the False Positives Study

Disposition	Total
Completed screener	617
Language barrier	244
Disconnected number	465
Wrong number (business, fax, or cell phone)	101
Deceased	12
Refused	342
Other (callback, no answer, busy, answering machine, or voicemail)	739
Total	2520

The screener phase was conducted using the current AHS questions and produced 617 completed interviews. Of the 617 completed screening interviews, 206 respondents completed the interview in such a way that suggested they might be receiving HUD housing assistance. Using their names, addresses, phone numbers, and the last four digits of their SSN, when available, these 206 individuals were matched with the Office of Public and Indian Housing Information Center (PIC) and Tenant Rental Assistance Certification System (TRACS) databases to determine if HUD administrative records indicated they receive a housing subsidy. Of the 206 individuals, 159, or 77 percent, did not match these databases. Of these 159 respondents, 37 were located in California, 52 were in Florida, and 70 were in Pennsylvania. These 159 respondents (that is, potential false positives) made up the pool of interviewees for the cognitive interview phase of the false positive study.

As noted above, of the 617 completed screening interviews, 206 respondents completed the interview in a way that suggested they might be receiving HUD housing assistance. These 206

individuals indicated they might be receiving HUD housing assistance by replying "Public Housing Authority or state agency" to Screener Question 6 (Q6) (To whom does someone in your household report your household's income?), or "yes" to one or more of the following questions:

> **Screener Q5**. As part of your rental agreement, does someone in your household need to answer questions about your household's income whenever your lease is up for renewal?
>
> **Screener Q7**. Does your household pay a lower rent because the government is paying part of the cost of the unit?
>
> **Screener Q8**. Is the building owned by a housing authority?
>
> **Screener Q10.** Did a housing authority or some similar agency give you a certificate or voucher to help pay the rent for the place where you live?

Fieldwork To Obtain Cognitive Interviews

Screener respondents who indicated they might be receiving HUD housing assistance (as defined above) and did not match the PIC and TRACS databases were the eligible participants in the cognitive phase of the false positive study. During these in-person interviews, respondents were asked eight questions regarding their housing situation, and they were also asked to indicate how sure they were of their answer and to define certain terms that were presented in the questions (for example, household, recertification, income, government, housing authority). Those who agreed to participate in the cognitive interviews received a $20 incentive payment.

Because of budget and task scheduling constraints, not all 159 eligible individuals were pursued in the cognitive phase of the study; instead, field interviewers were given rosters and asked to complete a specific number of interviews in their respective city. Rosters of these individuals' names, addresses, and phone numbers were given to ORC Macro field data collection staff. Field data collection staff (one in each city) originally were asked to complete six cognitive testing interviews. The staff in California and Florida was successful; each interviewer conducted six interviews. To do so, however, the interviewers made contact with all the individuals in their specific geographic location. The first data collector hired for the Pennsylvania interviews was not successful and completed no interviews. Therefore, the California and Florida data collectors were each asked to collect data to compensate for the lack of Pennsylvania interviews.

After the initial review of the data, a decision was made to pursue a further attempt to collect data from Pennsylvania. As a result of this second attempt, 13 interviews were completed in Pennsylvania. Also, in Florida and California, attempts were made to conduct four extra interviews. Although four additional interviews were successfully completed in California, only one additional interview in Florida was successfully conducted. Because of budgetary considerations, a decision was made to halt the interview process when the number of completed false positive interviews reached 32. Note that the number of completed false positive interviews is more than twice the original projected number of 15.

Table 5.2. False Positive Cognitive Sample

Location of Data Collection	Number of Attempted Interviews	Number of Completed Interviews
California	37	9
Pennsylvania	20	13
Florida	52	10
Total	109	32

Analytical Approach

The main analysis involved the comparison of the two sets of questions—the screener and the cognitive interviews—in terms of accuracy, supplemented by a key-words-in-context analysis of responses. For the cognitive questions, additional analyses described respondents' answers to the followup cognitive probes. When answers to the questions were incorrect, the followup cognitive probes helped to reveal why. For example, a respondent may have just been guessing or may have misunderstood a term used in a question. The followup cognitive probes focused on the following topics:

- **Respondents' explanations of their answers.** Explanations were important for understanding respondents' interpretation of questions. For example, if the answers to a certain question were often wrong, explanations revealed whether respondents did not understand the topic of the question.
- **Respondents' certainty about their answers.** Understanding of the questions is also revealed by ratings of the certainty of answers. If respondents are simply guessing, they should be unsure of the answer, which is different from being certain about an answer that is incorrect (which would reveal either a misconception or a misleading question).
- **Respondents' understanding of key terms.** Questions might be answered incorrectly because respondents failed to understand terms that were used in the questions. Therefore, investigating respondents' understanding of key terms was important.
- **Respondents' suggestions for improving the questions.** Asking the respondents how they would ask the question also provided valuable insight into the terminology most preferred and understood by false positives.

A Close Look at False Positive Respondents

Note that the research design assumed that data in the PICS and TRACS databases were correct, and that a comparison of the 206 completed screeners would yield only false positive respondents. Because of budget constraints, all 159 false positive respondents were not interviewed. For example, 57 of the cases in Pennsylvania were not contacted. Of course, it is not possible to know how many out of the initial 159 identified respondents who were neither contacted nor pursued for interviews were not actually false positives. As discussed later in this section, however, slightly more than half the 32 completed cognitive interviews conducted involved respondents who were found not to be false positives or could not be confirmed as false positives.

After the 32 cognitive interviews were conducted and the data were being reviewed, it became apparent that some of the false positive respondents used very clear language to explain the housing subsidy program in which they believed they participated, leading the research team to verify again the housing subsidy status of respondents. Recall that the first step in the cognitive phase of the false positive study was to compare the potential false positive screener respondents with the PIC and TRACS databases. The research team initially believed that all respondents who were actually receiving a HUD housing subsidy had been removed from the false positive sample before the cognitive interview phase of the false positive study. Because the data obtained in the cognitive interview raised some doubts about how well the PIC and TRACS matching process removed individuals who were receiving a subsidy, further investigation was conducted to determine the subsidy status of the 32 individuals who were initially identified as false positives. Note that the following investigative steps were not included as part of the original research and, therefore, were not included as a budgeted task. The ORC Macro team volunteered to further investigate the situation, however, and was encouraged to do so by the HUD project officer.

The following investigative steps were taken:

- **Investigation Step 1.** Because all the cases were assumed to be false positives, the investigation was implemented with this initial assumption. As such, the local housing authorities were not initially contacted to verify the status of the 32 interviewees because the local housing authority would not have jurisdiction over the privately owned housing the interviewees were thought to reside in as nonsubsidy recipients. Furthermore, the research team was not inclined to even consider expending resources in an attempt to contact housing authorities because of negative experiences with them (that is, poor cooperation) in earlier phases of the study. In the ethnographic and cognitive studies, despite the considerable effort expended to inform the HUD field offices, contact Public Housing Authority (PHA) managers, and establish communication with local PHA staff, PHAs were often unable to spare staff to participate in the verification of tenant information—although the research team had received assurances of cooperation from the respective PHAs at the outset of the fieldwork. But, note also that because the false positive study was not conducted in the domains of the PHAs used in the earlier phases of the study, there were also no preexisting cooperative relationships, however tenuous, to assist in getting any information on tenants. As a result, the investigation started with a web-based search of the 32 interviewees' addresses to verify the contact information of the apartment management of the building in which they resided.
- **Investigation Step 2.** A map search was performed to correctly identify the apartment complexes visited during the cognitive interviews. This step was conducted because individual street addresses do not necessarily indicate the apartment complex to which they belong. The research team needed to be sure they were correctly matching the apartment with the correct apartment complex.
- **Investigation Step 3.** A call was placed to the management offices of the apartments visited to inquire if a housing authority owned the apartments, if they accepted Section 8 tenant vouchers, or if they participated in some other type of housing subsidy program.
- **Investigative Step 4.** In all three cities, an attempt was made to verify information with the local housing authority. These efforts produced mixed results, however, because the respective housing authorities in the California and Florida cities did not provide direct feedback. In the Pennsylvania city, the local housing authority did provide some assistance to the research team when the apartment management could not be contacted or was unable to confirm the building status.

The investigation was more difficult in the California city. Pinpointing the apartments to verify the subsidy they accepted was extremely difficult because many apartments existed within a 0.5-mile radius of the interviewees' addresses. Contacting staff at the local PHA did not result in any assistance. Using the PHA's website, however, which listed all the housing authority properties, a comparison was made between the properties listed and the addresses of the false positive interviewees in that city. All calls to the Florida city's PHA were unsuccessful. In addition, at the time of this investigation, there was no dedicated PHA website to enable the researchers to search housing authority listings and compare addresses.

Based on this investigation of the 32 cognitive interview respondents, 14 were determined to be "true" or "confirmed false positives," 9 were "HUD subsidized respondents," and 9 were "suspected subsidy recipients." Confirmed false positives were defined as respondents for whom no evidence could be obtained indicating they received any type of housing subsidy. Based on the investigative process, the HUD-subsidized respondents were found to be those who lived in a housing authority-owned building, as evidenced by direct phone calls to the management offices or website information. The confirmation process led to the conclusion that these respondents were public housing recipients because the local housing authorities (or housing authority databases) provided the confirming information about the subsidy status of the property. The nine remaining respondents were categorized as suspected subsidy recipients because they reported receiving Section 8 assistance and were confirmed to live in a building that accepted Section 8 vouchers/assistance. The investigative process verified that these buildings accepted Section 8 tenant-based vouchers. Whether these nine respondents actually did receive Section 8 assistance, however, was not possible to confirm.

The research team was unable to definitively rule out the possibility that these respondents were either (1) actual Section 8 subsidy recipients who were not included in the database for some reason or (2) the classic false positive case—an income-eligible individual who believed he or she participated in the program but did not actually receive this housing subsidy. Therefore, the research team concluded that these cases could not be classified as either confirmed false positives or housing subsidy recipients, and the distinct category, suspected subsidy recipient, was preserved for further analysis. The team believed these respondents might add some additional information on the ability of the cognitive questions to reduce the occurrence of false positives in the AHS.

Subsequent to the ORC Macro investigation of the nine suspected subsidy recipients and long after the data collection and analysis were completed, the Office of Policy Development and Research's Program Monitoring and Research Division (PM&R) volunteered to use program administrative data to manually check the subsidy status of the nine suspected subsidy recipients. PM&R had already been most helpful by supplying the lists of potential respondents from HUD databases for earlier phases of the project.

PM&R's investigation tentatively identified one of the nine suspected subsidy recipients as a Section 8 voucher holder. Variation in the spelling of her last name had caused her to be missed in the database matching process. The subsidy status of the remaining eight suspected subsidy recipients still could not be confirmed. Note that, despite the tentative identification of one of the suspected subsidy recipients, all nine cases were preserved in a single analytic category as suspected subsidy recipients.

Table 5.3. False Positive Categorization of the False Positive Study Participants by Geographic Location

Confirmed False Positives		Subsidized (Public Housing) Respondents		Suspected Subsidy Recipients	
(n = 14)		(n = 9)		(n = 9)	
Geographic Location	Number of Respondents	Geographic Location	Number of Respondents	Geographic Location	Number of Respondents
California	7	California	0	California	0
Florida	4	Florida	1	Florida	7
Pennsylvania	3	Pennsylvania	8	Pennsylvania	2

PM&R contributed even further to the research effort by investigating whether suspected subsidy recipients might, in fact, be linked to another smaller federal housing assistance program. Although unable to definitively establish the receipt of assistance here, PM&R discovered that in the Florida city, five suspected subsidy recipients, who all lived in the same apartment complex, resided in a neighborhood with a concentration of Section 236 housing. The Section 236 program is a Federal Housing Administration multifamily mortgage insurance program in which landlords provide qualified residents with below market-rate rents. Interestingly, the late-confirmed voucher recipient was one of these aforementioned suspected subsidy recipients. Similarly, the two suspected subsidy recipients living in the Pennsylvania city resided in an apartment complex located in a neighborhood with at least one Section 236 project and two low-income housing tax credit (LIHTC) projects.

Findings

Tables 5.4 and 5.5 display the screener response patterns for the AHS screener and the cognitive guide, respectively. The response patterns in each table are presented for the 14 confirmed false positives, the 9 respondents known to be public housing residents, and the 9 suspected Section 8 subsidy recipients.

Several noteworthy patterns are evident in responses to the screener. The confirmed false positives reported that they answer questions about their household income (86 percent) to the building manager or landlord (75 percent) and apply on their own for a rental unit (80 percent). Slightly more than half also report that they pay a lower rent because the government is paying part of the cost of the unit, while slightly more than half also think their building is owned by a "housing authority." The nine respondents in the HUD-subsidized category (public housing residents), however, reported that a housing authority owned their building. More than three-quarters reported that they paid a lower rent because of government assistance, and that they need to answer household income questions when their lease is up for renewal. Note that on two key AHS questions about reporting household income and to whom income is reported, the confirmed false positives and HUD-subsidized respondents (public housing recipients) did not answer these questions in appreciably different ways. In the case of the suspected subsidy recipients, all reported that they must answer income questions and do so to a building manager or landlord.

The screener responses to the current AHS questions provide compelling insight into the areas in which false positives misidentify themselves as housing subsidy recipients. The confirmed

false positive responses to Screeners Q5 and Q7 are especially notable because these questions play a critical role in routing AHS respondents into either the housing subsidy recipient category or the nonrecipient category. For Screener Q5, 86 percent of the confirmed false positive respondents indicated they do answer questions about their income when the time comes to renew their lease or rental agreement. This finding suggests that for those living in nonsubsidy rental housing, providing income information at the time of lease renewal is a routine part of the rental transaction and not a process that only HUD housing subsidy recipients complete.

The confirmed false positive responses to Screener Q7 also offer important insights. Once again, note that 55 percent of the confirmed false positives indicated they pay a lower rent because the government is paying part of the cost of the unit. Based on data collected during the cognitive study, perhaps confirmed false positive respondents, like housing subsidy recipients, have a different conceptual understanding of what is meant by the term "the government." Or, as with some subsidy recipients, false positive respondents (who are income-eligible) may equate other benefit payments, such as those received for Supplemental Security Income, disability, or other forms of assistance, as "the government" assisting in paying their rent.

Table 5.4. Summary of Data Generated by the False Positive Screener

Screener Question Number	Screener Question	Confirmed False Positives (n = 14)		HUD-subsidized Respondents (Public Housing) (n = 9)		Suspected Subsidy Recipients (n = 9)	
			(%)		(%)		(%)
Q5	As part of your rental agreement, does someone in your household need to answer questions about your household's income when your lease is up for renewal?	Yes = 12 No = 2	86 14	Yes = 7 No = 2	78 22	Yes = 9 No = 0	100 —
Q6	To whom does someone in your household report your household's income: (1) a building manager or landlord; (2) a Public Housing Authority or state agency; or (3) someone else?	1 = 9 2 = 3	75 25	1 = 5 2 = 2	71 29	1 = 9 2 = 0	100 —
Q7	Does your household pay a lower rent because the government is paying part of the cost of the unit?	Yes = 6 No = 5	55 45	Yes = 6 No = 1	86 14	Yes = 4 No = 5	44 56
Q8	Is the building owned by a housing authority?	Yes = 4 No = 5	44 56	Yes = 8 No = 0	100 —	Yes = 1 No = 3	25 75
Q9	How did you come to live here? Did someone in your household apply on his/her own to the management here, or did an agency, such as a housing authority, assign this address to your household?	Apply = 4 Assign = 1	80 20			Apply = 3 Assign = 0	100 —
Q10	Did a housing authority or some similar agency give you a certificate or voucher to help pay the rent for the place where you live?	Yes = 2 No = 2	50 50			Yes = 0 No = 3	— 100

Table 5.5. Summary of Cognitive Data for Confirmed False Positives, HUD-subsidized (Public Housing) Respondents, and Suspected Subsidy Recipients

Cognitive Question Number	Cognitive Question	Confirmed False Positives (n = 14)		HUD-subsidized Respondents (Public Housing) (n = 9)		Suspected Subsidy Recipients (n = 9)	
			(%)		(%)		(%)
Q1	Each year, is someone in your household required to do a recertification to determine the amount of your rent?	Yes = 7 No = 7 DK = 0	50 50 —	Yes = 7 No = 2 DK = 0	78 22 —	Yes = 7 No = 1 DK = 1	78 11 11
Q2	Is your rent determined based on your household's income?	Yes = 8 No = 6 DK = 0	57 43 —	Yes = 9 No = 0 DK = 0	100 — —	Yes = 6 No = 1 DK = 2	67 11 22
Q3	Does the government help to pay for your rent?	Yes = 5 No = 8 DK = 1	36 57 7	Yes = 4 No = 4 DK = 1	44 44 11	Yes = 4 No = 5 DK = 0	44 56 —
Q4	Is the building owned by a housing authority?	Yes = 3 No = 7 DK = 4	21 50 29	Yes = 8 No = 0 DK = 1	89 — 11	Yes = 6 No = 0 DK = 3	67 — 33
Q5	Did a housing authority assign this address to your household?	Yes = 1 No = 13 DK = 0	7 93 —	Yes = 7 No = 2 DK = 0	78 22 —	Yes = 0 No = 8 DK = 1	— 89 11
Q6	Does your household have a voucher that allows you to choose where you live?	Yes = 0 No = 13 DK = 1	— 93 7	Yes = 1 No = 7 DK = 1	11 78 11	Yes = 1 No = 8 DK = 0	11 89 —
Q7	Is the building on Section 8?	Yes = 6 No = 3 DK = 5	43 21 36	Yes = 1 No = 6 DK = 2	11 67 22	Yes = 2 No = 3 DK = 4	22 33 44
Q8	Does the owner of the building receive a low-income housing tax credit?	Yes = 2 No = 2 DK = 10	14 14 71	Yes = 2 No = 0 DK = 7	22 — 78	Yes = 4 No = 1 DK = 4	44 11 44

Note: DK = don't know.

Comparison of Screener and Cognitive Responses for Confirmed False Positives

Cognitive Q1. Each year, is someone in your household required to do a recertification to determine the amount of your rent?

Half the confirmed false positive respondents answered this question affirmatively. This suggests that false positives identify their experience of going through a renewal process with determining the amount of their rent, one that involves reporting their income. Thus, the cognitive question wording could be further improved, perhaps by providing a definition of recertification or completely changing this terminology. Although 50 percent of the false positives answered "yes," Cognitive Q1 reduced the percentage of incorrect affirmative responses from 86 to 50 percent. Therefore, the revised question seems to be an improvement.

Cognitive Q2. Is your rent determined based on your household's income?

Interesting, more than half the confirmed false positives answered this question affirmatively. Based on the previous question's answer pattern, it is not surprising that false positive respondents identify with the idea that their rent is based on their income. Based on cognitive and ethnographic data, this question could be further revised to focus on the relationship between a yearly increase in income and a corresponding increase in rent amount, a concept that most housing subsidy recipients identified with. This refocusing may reduce the percentage of false positive respondents incorrectly answering the question.

Cognitive Q3. Does the government help to pay for your rent?

When compared to the screener question, some improvement was evidenced because the percentage of confirmed false positives answering affirmatively decreased to 36 percent. For some confirmed false positive respondents, however, the concept of the government paying part of their rent is misunderstood.

Cognitive Q4. Is the building owned by a housing authority?

No changes occurred from the current AHS question to this question for the cognitive interviewing. The high percentage of confirmed false positive respondents in both the screener phase and the cognitive interview that either do not know or answer affirmatively incorrectly suggests that false positives do not understand the term "housing authority."

Cognitive Q5. Did a housing authority assign this address to your household?

Almost all the confirmed false positive respondents seem to clearly understand the cognitive question, because 93 percent correctly answer "no." Perhaps false positive respondents focused on the idea of assignment when answering this question. In comparison to Screener Q9, a higher proportion of respondents answered the cognitive question correctly.

Cognitive Q6. Does your household have a voucher that allows you to choose where you live?

Rephrasing the question to focus on the concept that the voucher is used to select a place to live (housing choice) notably improved the ability of the confirmed false positive respondents to correctly answer the question, because 93 percent indicated they did not receive such a voucher. The revised question did increase the number of respondents providing the correct response when compared to Screener Q10.

Cognitive Q7. Is the building on Section 8?

No direct comparison screener question exists for this current AHS question. The current question was included as an alternative means of addressing the issue of building ownership as a proxy for identifying HUD housing subsidy status. Based on the responses, this question is *not* a good one to ask. The concept of Section 8 may be interpreted to mean that either the building accepts Section 8 vouchers (Section 8 tenant-based) or is a Section 8 project-based building.

Cognitive Q8. Does the owner of the building receive a low-income housing tax credit?

This question has no comparison question in the current AHS questionnaire. Not unexpectedly, confirmed false positive respondents are completely uninformed about LIHTC. Because LIHTC is a program in which the building owner, not the renter, participates, that many respondents do not know if their owner receives LIHTC was expected.

Chapter 6. Final Recommendations

Introduction

This chapter presents recommendations for modifying the current set of American Housing Survey (AHS) questions. These recommendations are derived from the combined analysis of ethnographic, cognitive, and false positive data. Each recommendation is accompanied by a discussion of the relevant findings from each wave of the study because they are specifically related to a current AHS question. Then, the suggested modifications or revisions are presented, along with a detailed discussion outlining the rationale for the proposed revision. For reference purposes, Table 2.2 (see Chapter 2) furnishes the current wording and order of the AHS questions. The chapter concludes with recommendations regarding troublesome terminology and the inclusion of various concepts found to be closely linked to housing subsidy recipients' understanding of the housing assistance process.

Proposed Modifications to the Current AHS Questions

Current AHS Question 1. As a part of your rental agreement, do you need to answer questions about your income whenever your lease is up for renewal?

The findings from all components of this study indicate that Question 1 requires some modification. Evidence from the false positive study indicates that routinely answering questions about income is a process in which those who do *not* receive a housing subsidy increasingly participate. Half the confirmed false positive respondents completing a cognitive interview indicated they are required to recertify to determine the amount of their rent when their lease is up for renewal. This finding suggests that for many people living in unsubsidized rental housing, providing income information at the time of lease renewal is more likely to be a routine part of the lease renewal transaction and not a process that only U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) housing subsidy recipients undergo. This finding presents a serious challenge to the current AHS questions because this question serves as a method of distinguishing between those who receive a subsidy and those who do not.

Furthermore, Question 1 is problematic because housing recipients do not typically use the term "renewal." The findings examining the language recipients use to describe their subsidies illustrate that the term "recertification" is most often used, regardless of housing subsidy type. For most ethnographic and cognitive respondents, "recertification" was understood to mean the process of verifying one's eligibility to remain in housing.

Many respondents defined "recertification" generally by describing the need to maintain financial "legality" to remain in their housing, while a few specifically mentioned that "recertification" was

reviewing one's income and determining the amount of rent. Although most Section 8 tenant-based respondents in this study had a different operational definition of recertification (the process of having their housing inspected annually to renew one's housing agreement), they still connected the term to an annual process of retaining or renewing their housing subsidy. The findings also suggest that those with rental subsidies may conceptually identify more readily with the idea of recertification as simply determining the amount of their rent rather than whether their rent remains the same.

Proposed Modified Question	Each year, as part of your rental agreement, is your household required to complete recertification by reporting income or who lives with you to determine the amount rent you pay? (1) Yes (2) No

The modifications in language to the current question are designed to (1) apply the more frequently used terminology of those who do receive a housing subsidy and (2) incorporate an additional process that would not be identified or recognized as part of the lease renewal process for those who *do provide* annual income information but *do not receive* a subsidy. Although the false positive study illustrated that many who do not receive a housing subsidy provide information about their income at the time of renewal, they are not required to report the number of individuals residing with them as part of determining the rental amount. By adding this language, the question wording links the process of reporting income and the number of individuals living at the residence together conceptually. This language provides a conceptual understanding for "recertification" that housing subsidy recipients would recognize as familiar but focuses on a process that would be foreign to nonsubsidy individuals who do recall reporting income annually as part of their rental agreement. Using this logic, those who do not receive a subsidy but report income annually answer the question with a "no" response, thereby distinguishing between those who receive a subsidy and those who do not.

Current AHS Question 2. To whom do you report your income?

Based on the findings from this study, the recommendation is that this question be deleted entirely. Drawing on the ethnographic and cognitive findings in particular, this question proved to be extremely problematic for several reasons. First, given the process of decentralization and local variation that has occurred in the housing subsidy environment, many Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) also serve as places where Section 8 recipients go to report their income. This concept (to whom do you report income) was not extremely salient among respondents in either the ethnographic or cognitive phases of the study. In particular, some participants in the ethnographic study reported seeing a manager or landlord to report their income, even when their subsidy type would have identified this response as incorrect. This finding presents the difficult task of assessing whether respondents simply misunderstand the question or whether they mislabel to whom they report income. Given the range of local variation, accurately determining the answer would be difficult.

In addition, respondents were unsure of who the "whom" referred to in the question. Some respondents interpreted the question to refer to the annual process of recertification, while others recalled the person who received their monthly rental payment. The cognitive study

indicated that although many were able to provide an answer, respondents were somewhat unsure of their answers, indicating weaker conceptual knowledge.

The decentralization and local variation among PHAs and projects, combined with the uncertainty respondents express when assessing their own answers, led to the conclusion that the current question's wording is extremely challenging. Even if it were possible to devise a question response set that could accurately phrase the response options in language that would capture the range of local variations that respondents encounter in describing to whom they report their income, it would be highly burdensome. It is difficult to absolutely verify the correctness of all respondents' answers because respondents may be accurately describing the local variation of their specific PHA/project. As a result, determining the type of housing (public housing, Section 8 tenant-based, or Section 8 project-based) respondents live in based on the responses to this question would be problematic.

Current AHS Question 3. Do you pay a lower rent because the government is paying part of the cost of the unit?

Evidence suggests that many housing subsidy recipients have a weak conceptual understanding of the government's role in paying part of the costs for their housing. The ethnographic, cognitive, and false positive studies indicate that some housing subsidy recipients simply do not make the conceptual connection that links their housing subsidy to the federal government. In the cognitive study, those respondents who indicated that the government did not pay their housing costs responded that the housing authority or HUD paid for their housing, but they did not indicate that either HUD or the housing authority were affiliated in any way with the federal government. Additional areas of misunderstanding occurred with respondents who inaccurately answered the question based on other sources of income supplied by the federal government, sources they used to supplement their housing costs. Some respondents indicated that their Social Security income, which came from the government, paid for their housing: therefore, the government did pay some part of their rent costs. Although these housing subsidy recipients answered the question correctly, their answers were not based on knowledge that the government subsidizes the cost of their apartment. Rather, their answers were based on the sources of their *own* income. Responses from the false positive study indicate that among those who do not receive a subsidy, the potential exists for misunderstanding or answering incorrectly for this same reason.

When asked to provide their own definition for the term "government," as the term was understood in the current AHS question, respondents also expressed varying understandings of this word. Most respondents tended to express some confusion over what the term "government" meant. Some interpreted it to mean their local housing authority, while others thought it referenced the federal government. In all waves of the study, a notable number of respondents asked for clarification on the kind of government being referenced.

Proposed Modified Question	Is your rent amount lower because you are in a federal, state, or local government housing program? (1) Yes (2) No

The study findings indicate that a modification to the question that provides clarification about the term "government" would help improve the correctness and certainty of respondents'

answers. This question revision draws on the overwhelming evidence that respondents had a clear understanding that their housing was "affordable," or priced lower than housing others in their neighborhood may have been receiving, or that their housing was the kind where someone else provided assistance in covering the costs of housing for low-income people. The revision combines this conceptual understanding with respondents' ability to acknowledge the receipt of a housing subsidy.

Current AHS Question 4. Is the building owned by a Public Housing Authority?

This current AHS question relies on respondents' conceptual understanding of building ownership as a means of determining housing subsidy type. It also relies on respondents' understanding and use of the words "Public Housing Authority." Evidence from all phases of this study indicates that Question 4 should be revised because respondents expressed uncertainty in understanding what a Public Housing Authority is or used different language to describe the ownership of their building. The findings also indicate that building ownership was not an especially salient concept for study participants.

First, evidence from all phases of the study supports the conclusion that subsidy recipients do not commonly use the wording "Public Housing Authority." For cases in which respondents do use the language "housing authority," they typically include the name of the locale where they reside (for example, "Jersey City Housing Authority" or "Howard County Housing Authority"). Wave 1 of the cognitive study indicated that although 71 percent of respondents had heard of the words "Public Housing Authority," a relatively low mean certainty rating existed for this terminology (2.4 with 3 as maximum certainty). This signified that respondents were not sure what a Public Housing Authority was. Wave 2 cognitive findings supported this trend. The ethnographic findings indicated that respondents almost never used the words "Public Housing Authority" and moderately used the words "housing authority" in describing their apartment search, sources of rental subsidy knowledge, or process of applying for housing. Note that even when the more general wording preferred by respondents was used ("housing authority"), many participants in this study still displayed a notable level of uncertainty about their own understanding of the concept.

When asked to describe what a housing authority is, some respondents identified it as the agency that provides help in finding housing for low-income people. Others defined it as a set of counselors that help a person find resources, with no mention of low-income housing. Other respondents described a housing authority as subsidized affordable housing, a place that pays your rent when you are low income, or the government or HUD itself.

The findings indicate, however, that public housing recipients may more readily understand and commonly define the words "housing authority" in the expected way. Evidence from the ethnography and cognitive studies, along with the false positive responses to the revised question "Is your building owned by a housing authority?" provide evidence that public housing respondents more readily identify with this concept, perhaps because of the kinds of interactions they have with a housing authority.

Regarding building ownership, this study found that respondents seldom spontaneously discussed this concept. It does not seem to be a salient concept in individuals' thinking about rent assistance. Most respondents were able to provide some information about the ownership of their building but often mislabeled the ownership. Respondents' conceptual understanding of building ownership was based on a connection between either to whom respondents paid their rent (primarily among public housing recipients) or the identification of the property as privately owned—that is, having a name that suggested private ownership or management (Section 8

tenant-based and project-based program participants and low-income housing tax credit [LIHTC] recipients).

A specific interaction or discussion served as the conceptual basis of reference for those who affirmatively and accurately provided responses to questions about building ownership, particularly in the case of housing authority ownership. These respondents indicated that the housing authority received their rent checks every month or they had to travel to the housing authority in person to make payments; therefore, their building was owned by a housing authority.

Proposed Modified Question	Is the housing authority your landlord? (1) Yes (2) No

The modified question removes the ambiguity some respondents express in defining a "housing authority" by building on the saliency of specific interactions that all subsidy recipients encounter. The revised question focuses on distinctions in building ownership/maintenance that both public housing recipients and those who receive other types of subsidies would be able to more clearly identify with, based on their responses to questions about building ownership/maintenance in the current study.

These modifications are based on saliency of common interactions that respondents might have with the housing authority, such as paying rent or requesting maintenance. In addition, the common understanding and terminology for a "landlord" as one who manages the property, collects rent, or provides maintenance for the building is drawn on. Recollection of this interaction is a particularly salient memory for public housing respondents, one that helps them define what a housing authority is. Using this logic, those who do not have these kinds of interactions with a housing authority would also be able to answer the question, based on similarly salient recollections of paying rent and addressing maintenance concerns.

Current AHS Question 5. How did you come to live here? Did you apply to the management here, or did an agency, such as a Public Housing Authority, assign this address to you?

The study findings indicate that although many respondents were able to answer this question, their answers were impacted by the ability to recall the interaction and local variation in the housing application environment. The part of the question that respondents most readily identified with was the concept of whether they were assigned to their housing.

The study findings indicate that respondents, regardless of their subsidy type, were able to recall aspects of their housing application process and indicate whether they were assigned to housing. Whom they applied to was a less salient concept for respondents. "Assign" was understood to mean someone else choosing a place for an individual or being assigned a certain building or apartment by the housing authority. Notably, the respondents' search process in locating housing provided the basis for answering questions on whether the housing authority assigned an address to the household. These recollections were salient for individuals and were ones that most respondents could recall with seemingly little effort. Public housing residents clearly recalled having little choice in selecting their housing. Section 8 tenant-based recipients

provided descriptions of their search process, contrasting it with being placed in housing selected by the housing authority.

Some notable wording difficulties and distinctions in conceptual understanding concerning the word "assign" exist, however. For many Section 8 tenant-based residents, the housing authority's role in providing a referral list of properties was understood as being assigned to a building, primarily because the housing authority listing or referral narrowed the scope of potential housing choices. These respondents believed that the housing authority was making them choose between limited options, because the housing authority had chosen the properties for the respondents to initially select housing. As previously discussed, the findings of this study indicate that recipients never used the terminology "Public Housing Authority," and that even the terminology "housing authority" is somewhat difficult to understand among recipients and false positives.

In addition, some confusion existed concerning use of the word "address." Some respondents who should have answered versions of the question presented in the cognitive study affirmatively did not because they disagreed with the idea that the housing authority assigns their address. Rather, they identified the Post Office as the entity that assigns addresses. Because this happened more than a few times, this potential source of unintentional respondent error is worth noting.

If the question is to remain, the suggested modification is as follows:

Proposed Modified Question	Did a housing authority assign this apartment or building to your household? (1) Assigned to specific apartment or building (2) Not assigned

Current AHS Question 6. Did a Public Housing Authority or some similar agency give you a certificate or voucher to help pay the rent for this unit?

Reasons for proposing some modification to the question arise from several sources. First, the certificate program under Section 8 tenant-based housing no longer exists. When asked to describe what a "certificate" is, using the current AHS question above, about half of those asked provided a general definition of the term, understanding it to be a reward one receives for doing a good job. Most remaining respondents defined it as government assistance, with no specific references to housing or housing choice (for example, a voucher for food or clothing). The findings from this study support the general logic of this question that respondents are able to indicate with a high degree of certainty and accuracy whether they do indeed receive a housing voucher for their housing subsidy. The ethnographic, cognitive, and false positive study findings, however, indicate that housing subsidy recipients focus other characteristics of the voucher as more salient, rather than who supplied the voucher or that the voucher helps to pay for their housing.

One of the most salient concepts concerning whether one received a housing voucher is the idea that the voucher provides housing choice. Overall, respondents either knew what a voucher was and could say they did or did not have one, or they had never heard of a voucher that provided housing choice and, therefore, concluded they did not have one. In particular, Section 8 tenant-based respondents described the voucher in terms of its portability and the flexibility it provided in the housing search process. In the ethnographic study, Section 8 tenant-

based respondents repeatedly described the portability of their housing voucher and the fact that the voucher provided them with housing choice in selecting their residence. In contrast, public housing recipients discussed the fact that their type of housing did not allow them flexibility in searching for or choosing their apartment. Most cognitive study respondents, regardless of their rental subsidy type, were able to provide correct answers to questions asking them if they received a voucher. In the cognitive study, 97 percent of respondents correctly indicated whether they had a voucher that allowed them to choose their housing, with a high mean certainty rating, 2.7 (3.0 is the maximum score).

Findings from the false positive study, cognitive phase, also indicate that respondents have a clear sense of whether they receive a voucher. Rephrasing the question to focus on the concept that the voucher is used to select a place to live (housing choice) notably improved the ability of the confirmed false positive respondents to correctly answer the question, because 93 percent indicated they did not receive such a voucher. When the current AHS question wording was used, only 50 percent of confirmed false positives provided correct responses.

Proposed Modified Question	Does your household have a housing voucher that allows you to choose where you live and pays for the rent? (1) Yes (2) No

The modification to this question eliminates the outmoded and misunderstood terminology of "certificate." It also removes the language "Public Housing Authority or similar agency" from the question because the findings indicate that all subsidized respondents do not spontaneously use the term "housing authority." The reworded question focuses on the characteristic of the housing voucher that respondents found to be most salient: the fact that the voucher provides housing choice or the ability for holders to select their own housing. This modification provides a clear conceptual line of understanding for those who receive the voucher (Section 8 tenant-based), and those who do not (public housing and Section 8 project-based). Findings from all phases of the study support the conclusion that both those who receive the voucher and those who do not can answer questions based on the role of the voucher in providing housing choice.

Building on this concept of housing choice and its saliency to respondents, the recommendation is to add a question to serve as further verification of the housing subsidy status of respondents. The recommended question is as follows:

New Question	Can you use your housing voucher to move to another location? (1) Yes (2) No

The addition of this question further verifies the housing status of respondents by confirming that recipients either do or do not receive a housing voucher that provides choice and portability. Another salient aspect of housing choice emerging from the findings was the idea that the housing voucher also provided the option of portability—the ability to move to another location of one's own choosing and keep the housing subsidy. This type of portability is in dramatic

contrast to the experiences of public housing and Section 8 project-based recipients. The portability and flexibility of the Section 8 tenant-based voucher were concepts clearly understood by Section 8 tenant-based respondents, while the lack of this flexibility was especially salient to those who received other types of rental subsidies (public housing, Section 8 project-based). For example, Section 8 tenant-based recipients often discussed the fact that their voucher moved with them. Even if a respondent mistakenly indicates that he or she receives a housing voucher, the next question focuses even more on the specific nature and purpose of the Section 8 tenant-based voucher.

Order of Questions

The proposed modifications to the current AHS questions also consider the ordering of questions to improve on respondents' ability to accurately answer questions about their housing subsidy. These questions will distinguish respondents first by those that do not receive a subsidy at all and those that do receive a subsidy, and then by those who receive public housing and those who receive Section 8 (either project- or tenant-based) or another subsidy. Given the complex nature of housing recipients' cognition and use of language and building on the work of past studies, using a one question-only strategy to ascertain the correct housing subsidy status of future AHS respondents may not be the best plan for producing the most accurate data. Modeling on the current AHS approach, these proposed modifications use a strategy that includes one or two questions that verify the consistency of the answers while further demarcating the distinctions among respondents. This approach views the question organization in stages, using each question to direct or branch respondents into the major categories of difference, and then refines the distinctions.

The modifications are also designed to minimize the use of skip patterns and "don't know" responses. Although respondent burden is a concern with any survey, having respondents answer most of the revised questions is preferable. This question design promotes internal validation and confirmation of responses as the questions progress. Table 6.1 presents the previously discussed modifications in order, along with the outcomes produced by the response patterns.

As with the current AHS questions, the modified questions identify the need to distinguish between those that receive a housing subsidy and those that do not as the first task of the questions. To this end, the first and second revised questions met this objective. Because determining whether a respondent has a subsidy at all is such a critical task, these two questions are designed to produce this knowledge. The third question is used to determine whether the remaining subsidy recipients are those who receive public housing. The modified question removes the ambiguity some respondents express in defining a "housing authority" by building on the saliency of specific interactions that all subsidy recipients encounter. By the time Question 4 is presented, respondents ideally would be indicating whether they participate in the Section 8 tenant-based program, Section 8 project-based program, or another type of housing subsidy. Question 5 serves as a verification of the housing status of respondents to the previously revised question. In this way, the status of those who are indeed Section 8 tenant-based respondents is confirmed.

Table 6.1. Question Order for the Proposed Modified Questions To Classify Housing Subsidy Status in the AHS

Question Number	Modified and New Questions
1	Each year, as part of your rental agreement, is your household required to complete *recertification* by reporting income or who lives with you to determine the amount rent you pay? Yes = Possible subsidy recipient; GO TO Q2 No = Does not receive a subsidy; GO TO Q2
2	Is your rent amount lower because you are in a federal, state, or local government housing program? Yes = Possible subsidy recipient; GO TO Q3 No = Does not receive a subsidy; GO TO Q3 [if respondent answered No to Q1 and Q2, classify as nonsubsidy recipient]
3	Is the housing authority your landlord? Yes = Public housing recipient; GO TO Q4 No = Section 8 project-based, Section 8 tenant-based recipient, or other type of housing subsidy recipient; GO TO Q4
4	Does your household have a housing voucher that allows you to choose where you live and pays for the rent? Yes = Section 8 tenant-based; GO TO Q5 No = Section 8 project-based or other subsidy; GO TO Q5
5	Can you use your housing voucher to move to another location? Yes = Section 8 tenant-based No = Section 8 project-based or other subsidy

Recommendations on Concepts and Terminology

The discussion of modifications that would potentially improve the AHS included some discussion of the concepts that study respondents found to be especially salient over the ethnography, cognitive study, and false positive study. Although the previous discussion presented most of these concepts, presenting them again individually seems useful because these concepts could be the basis for future research on the topic. The findings indicate that the following concepts and recollections of events were extremely salient to housing subsidy recipients.

Concepts

Relation Between Income and Rent

Most respondents in the study expressed the idea that their rent is related to their income, understanding that rent assistance lowers their rent payments or at least that their rent is relatively inexpensive when compared to others. Most recalled, in either the ethnographic or cognitive interviews, that their rent was based on the amount of their income. Respondents generally indicated that if their income increased, their rent would increase. Section 8 tenant- and project-based residents often explained that as a rule their rent is a fixed percentage of their income, as did some LIHTC residents. The relationship between an increase in income and an increase in rent was also an important memory in helping respondents answer questions about their rent amount. Respondents recalled the outcomes of a change in their income, stating they had experienced rent increases in the past because of the change in income.

Understanding a Housing Voucher and Its Provision of Housing Choice

In all phases of the study, most respondents were able to provide correct answers, based on their rental subsidy type, to questions asking them if they received a voucher, regardless of the wording. False positive respondents were able to successfully answer the modified question. Respondents either knew what a voucher was and could say they did or did not have one, or they had never heard of a voucher that provided housing choice and, therefore, concluded they did not have one. As discussed earlier, this concept was especially salient to Section 8 tenant-based respondents.

Assignment to Housing

The idea of being assigned to an apartment or building also resonated with respondents. If this concept is to be used for the basis of questions, however, it should be modified because some notable wording difficulties and distinctions in the conceptual understanding emerged. For Section 8 project-based residents in this study, the housing authority's role in providing an initial referral list of properties was understood as being assigned to a building, primarily because the housing authority listing or referral narrowed the scope of potential housing choices. These respondents believed that the housing authority was making them choose between limited options, because the housing authority had chosen the properties from which the respondent could initially select housing.

Decreased Usefulness of Annual Income Reporting Verification for Distinguishing Subsidy and Nonsubsidy Recipients

In the case of annual income verification/reporting, housing subsidy recipients were generally able to accurately answer that their rental assistance requires an annual process of verification to continue to receive the subsidy assistance. Evidence from the ethnographic, cognitive, and false positive studies support this conclusion. As the findings previously discussed show, however, the difficulties with this concept arise because this procedure is not one that only housing subsidy recipients undergo annually. Some nonrecipients are also required to provide information about their income annually, thereby leading to confusion in answering questions of this nature.

Terminology To Avoid

The findings also indicate that some terminology should be avoided in querying individuals about their housing subsidy status—terms that housing subsidy recipients do not understand and seemingly seldom use themselves or terminology that is used in an unconventional way by housing subsidy recipients. Key terminology that falls into this category includes the following:

- Public Housing Authority
- Certificate
- Address
- Renewal
- HUD
- Section 8

The terms "Public Housing Authority," "certificate," and "address" have been discussed previously. Many respondents indicated that a "renewal" is the actual paper lease on their apartment. The terms "HUD" and "Section 8" were widely used by respondents, but how well the terms were understood is unclear. For example, "HUD" was often used in an unconventional way—to refer to a type of rent assistance rather than to a government agency. In some cases, it appeared that "Section 8" was used to refer to rent assistance in general, rather than to a specific type of rent assistance. Section 8 was generally defined as "housing for low-income people" or another form of rent assistance. Note that some respondents simply had never heard of Section 8 or mistakenly thought the program was Section "A" housing.

Regarding the terminology used by housing subsidy recipients, note that the findings indicate a wide range of diversity in the words recipients use to describe their housing, in part because of local cultural contexts. As the ethnographic study findings illustrate, the most common terminology that recipients of any type of housing subsidy used, Section 8, is often misused or understood in general terms to mean low-income housing.

List of Appendixes

Appendix A. Wave 1. Ethnographic Interview Guide
Wave 2. Ethnographic Interview Guide

Appendix B. Wave 1. Cognitive Study Interview Protocols (Forms for Modules A, B, C, and D)
Wave 2. Cognitive Study Interview Protocols (Forms for Modules A, B, C, and D)

Appendix C. The Screener Questionnaire (Current AHS Questions)
The Cognitive Questionnaire

Appendix D. Interviewees' Responses to the Screener Interview (Current AHS Questions) in the False Positive Study
Interviewees' Responses to the Cognitive Interview of the False Positive Study

Technical Appendices

DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES FOR IDENTIFYING THE HOUSING SUBSIDY STATUS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Appendix A:

WAVE 1. ETHNOGRAPHIC INTERVIEW GUIDE

WAVE 2. ETHNOGRAPHIC INTERVIEW GUIDE

WAVE 1. ETHNOGRAPHIC INTERVIEW GUIDE

ETHNOGRAPHIC INTERVIEW GUIDE WAVE 1

INTERVIEW SUMMARY INFORMATION

_____ Location of interview
_____ Date of interview
_____ Time interview began
_____ Time interview ended
_____ Interviewer name
_____ Interviewee (respondent) name

ORDER OF EVENTS

- Introduction of interviewer – establish friendly, informal rapport
- Confidentiality and non-disclosure statement
- Incentive payment; receipt
- Interview

INTERVIEWER REMINDERS

- Make sure that all of the topics below (Grand Tour and Probes) are discussed at some point in the interview – *check them off below after they are discussed*

- We expect that it will probably take at least 45 minutes to cover all of the topics below. *Make sure that interviews do not go over 90 minutes.*

- Don't phrase the questions exactly as they appear below – instead, you should word the questions in whatever way seems appropriate and natural to you

- Be creative! Feel free to use other probes that are not shown below – get the interviewee to expand on her/his answers

- Make sure the interviewee does most of the talking – your role is to listen and learn, take notes, and keep the interview "on topic"

OUTLINE OF TOPICS

I. Searching for an Apartment
II. Satisfaction with the Apartment
III. Respondents' Knowledge of Their Rent Assistance
IV. Help in Understanding Rent Assistance
V. Relationship with Landlord and Staff at the Local Public Housing Authority (PHA)

TOPICS TO COVER IN THE INTERVIEW

I. Searching for an Apartment

Grand Tour:

_____ Describe the process you went through to search for your apartment – be as detailed as possible

Probes:

_____ Who helped you to search for this apartment

_____ Sources of information that were helpful in your apartment search -- explain

_____ Sources of information that were *not* helpful in your apartment search -- explain

II. Satisfaction with the Apartment

Grand Tour:

_____ How satisfied you are with your apartment – explain

Probes:

_____ How the apartment compares with others you may have lived in

_____ Satisfaction with the *cost* of the apartment (rent, utilities) – explain

III. Respondents' Knowledge of Their Rent Assistance

Introductory Definition (SAY THIS BEFORE YOU ASK ABOUT THE TOPICS BELOW): "According to our records, you receive rent assistance. 'Rent assistance' means that you pay a lower rent than most other people in your neighborhood who don't receive rent assistance."

Grand Tour:

_____ Tell me about the kind of rent assistance you receive – be as detailed as possible

Probes:

_____ What words do *you* use to refer to the type of rent assistance you receive

_____ Tell me in your own words how you'd explain to a friend or relative how to get rent assistance – be as detailed as possible

_____ What have you heard about other kinds of rent assistance (aside from the kind you get)

_____ Technical words or "jargon" that people use to talk about rent assistance – give as many as possible, try to define each one

_____ Informal or everyday words that people use to talk about rent assistance – give as many as possible, try to define each one

IV. Help in Understanding Rent Assistance

Grand Tour:

_____ Who has helped you to understand rent assistance -- explain

Probes:

_____ Aside from this interview, have you ever been asked to describe or explain your rent assistance to anyone – explain

_____ Did landlords or PHA staff help you to understand rent assistance -- explain

_____ What is the best way to learn about rent assistance -- explain

VI. Relationship with Landlord and Staff at the Local Public Housing Authority (PHA)

Grand Tour:

_____ Describe your relationship with your landlord and PHA staff

Probes:

_____ Give examples of *positive* interactions with landlord and PHA staff

_____ Give examples of *negative* interactions with landlord and PHA staff

WAVE 2. ETHNOGRAPHIC INTERVIEW GUIDE

ETHNOGRAPHIC INTERVIEW GUIDE WAVE 2

INTERVIEW SUMMARY INFORMATION

_____ Location of interview
_____ Date of interview
_____ Time interview began
_____ Time interview ended
_____ Interviewer name
_____ Interviewee (respondent) name

ORDER OF EVENTS

* Introduction of interviewer - establish friendly, informal rapport
* Confidentiality and non-disclosure statement
* Incentive payment; receipt
* Interview

INTERVIEWER REMINDERS

* Make sure that all of the topics below (Grand Tour and Probes) are discussed at some point in the interview - check them off below after they are discussed

* Make sure that interviews do not go over 90 minutes.

* Don't phrase the questions exactly as they appear below - instead, you should word the questions in whatever way seems appropriate and natural to you

* Be creative! Feel free to use other probes that are not shown below - get the interviewee to expand on her/his answers

* Make sure the interviewee does most of the talking - your role is to listen and learn, take notes, and keep the interview "on topic"

OUTLINE OF TOPICS

I. Respondents' Knowledge of Their Rent Assistance
II. Reactions to descriptions of rent assistance
III. Importance of understanding rent assistance
IV. Importance of aspects of the housing situation

I. Respondents' Knowledge of Their Rent Assistance

Introductory Definition (**SAY THIS BEFORE YOU ASK ABOUT THE TOPICS BELOW**): "According to our records, you receive rent assistance. 'Rent assistance' means that you pay a lower rent than most other people in your neighborhood who don't receive rent assistance."

Grand Tour:

_____ Tell me about the kind of rent assistance you receive - be as detailed as possible

Probes:

_____ What words do you use to refer to the type of rent assistance you receive

_____ Tell me in your own words how you'd explain to a friend or relative how to get rent assistance - be as detailed as possible

_____ What have you heard about other kinds of rent assistance (aside from the kind you get)

_____ Words that people use to talk about rent assistance - give as many as possible, try to define each one

II. Reactions to descriptions of rent assistance

INSTRUCTIONS FOR INTERVIEWERS. Each description will be presented to the interviewee on a separate sheet of paper, one at a time. The interviewer will read the description out loud and ask the interviewee to read along. Then the interviewer will ask the probes regarding the description. After the probes for the description are finished, the next description will be presented, and so forth until all of the descriptions are presented along with the probes for each. Interviewees may retain previously covered descriptions, in case they wish to compare across different descriptions.

DESCRIPTION A. "With one type of rent assistance, a person applies to the housing authority for rent assistance. The housing authority determines whether the person is eligible for rent assistance based on income. If the person is eligible for rent assistance, the housing authority assigns the person to live in a specific building that is owned by the housing authority."

Probes:

_____ Which parts of the description are true of your present situation

_____ Which words might you or others use to describe this kind of rent assistance

_____ Have any parts of the description been true of your situation at any time in the past

_____ Do you know anyone else who receives this kind of rent assistance (e.g., friends, family, neighbors)

DESCRIPTION B. "With another type of rent assistance, a person applies to the housing authority for rent assistance. The housing authority determines whether the person is eligible for rent assistance based on income. If the person is eligible for rent assistance, the person then searches for an apartment. The rent assistance can be used in any apartment that the person chooses, as long as the landlord or building manager is willing to accept it."

Probes:

_____ Which parts of the description are true of your present situation

_____ Which words might you or others use to describe this kind of rent assistance

_____ Have any parts of the description been true of your situation at any time in the past

_____ Do you know anyone else who receives this kind of rent assistance (e.g., friends, family, neighbors)

DESCRIPTION C. "With another type of rent assistance, the person first chooses a building. The person applies directly to the manager or landlord of the building to receive rent assistance. The building manager or landlord determines whether the person is eligible for rent assistance based on income. If the person is eligible for rent assistance, the person can live in the building and receive rent assistance. The landlord or property management company receives funds from the government to pay for the rent assistance."

Probes:

_____ Which parts of the description are true of your present situation

_____ Which words might you or others use to describe this kind of rent assistance

_____ Have any parts of the description been true of your situation at any time in the past

_____ Do you know anyone else who receives this kind of rent assistance (e.g., friends, family, neighbors)

DESCRIPTION D. "With another type of rent assistance, the person first chooses a building. The person applies to the manager or landlord of the building to receive rent assistance. The building manager or landlord determines whether the person is eligible for rent assistance based on income. If the person is eligible for rent assistance, the person can live in the building and receive rent assistance. The landlord or property management company receives a tax credit from the government in exchange for providing rent assistance."

Probes:

_____ Which parts of the description are true of your present situation

_____ Which words might you or others use to describe this kind of rent assistance

_____ Have any parts of the description been true of your situation at any time in the past

_____ Do you know anyone else who receives this kind of rent assistance (e.g., friends, family, neighbors)

III. Importance of understanding rent assistance

Grand tour:

_____ How important is it to you to understand how rent assistance works, and why (or why not)

Probe:

_____ What conditions or rules of rent assistance are the most important to know about

IV. Importance of aspects of the housing situation

Grand tour:

_____ What is most important to you about your housing situation

Probes:

_____ How important is it that your rent does not go up, and why (or why not)

What would you do if your rent --

_____ increased by $50/month?

(Assure the respondent that we do not expect this to happen, we just need to understand the importance to her/him of the amount of rent.)

_____ increased by $200/month?

_____ How important is it to you to live in this neighborhood, and why (or why not)

Appendix B:

WAVE 1.
COGNITIVE STUDY INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS
(FORMS FOR MODULES A, B, C, AND D)

WAVE 2.
COGNITIVE STUDY INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS
(FORMS FOR MODULES A, B, C, AND D)

WAVE 1.
COGNITIVE STUDY INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS
(FORMS FOR MODULES A, B, C, AND D)

MODULE A

Module A

General instructions:

Notation in the questionnaire:

- Instructions to interviewers (including probes, skip patterns, etc.) are noted in **bolded square brackets ([ ])**. These are not read to respondents.
- Items that should be always be read verbatim (word-for-word) and not paraphrased are in quotation marks (" "). Aside from the items in quotation marks, interviewers may paraphrase if the respondent does not seem to understand a question. When paraphrasing, be very careful not to use any language or expression that the respondent might view as a hint of the desired answer.
- Items that should be emphasized when reading a question are in *italics*.

Writing respondents' answers:

- Write respondents' answers in the space below each question. Feel free to use the back of pages or the margins if that is helpful.
- Write in a way that will enable someone else (specifically, staff in Calverton, or the client) to read and understand respondents' answers.
- Write answers in a way that will enable the reader to understand the ideas, beliefs, and concepts that the respondent is trying to express in her/his answer. It is not necessary to write the answers verbatim or word-for-word; paraphrasing is acceptable, as long as the respondent's ideas are noted accurately and completely. Exception: Write verbatim, in quotation marks, any words (either technical or slang) that the respondent uses for: (1) **housing programs** (for example, "Section 8", "conventional"), (2) **housing offices** (for example, "the management office", "housing authority"), (3) **staff** involved with housing (for example, "manager", "housing counselor"), and (4) **recertification** of eligibility for rent assistance (for example, "yearly papers", "renewal").

Introduction:

According to our records, you get rent assistance. "Rent assistance" means that you pay a lower rent than most other people in your area who don't get rent assistance.

I am going to ask you some questions about things related to rent assistance. This isn't a test. The questions don't necessarily have just one right answer. We just want to know what *you* think the answers are.

Some of the questions are difficult. They're not things that people usually think about. Don't be surprised if you find it hard to answer some of them.

When I ask you a question, you don't have to answer quickly. Please take the time that you need to think about the answer. After you've thought about it, tell me the best answer you can think of. Even if you're not completely sure the answer is right, just tell me the best answer that you can think of. Again, there's not necessarily one right answer, we're just interested in what you think.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

First I'm going to ask you some questions about the relation between income and rent assistance.

1. Think about people who get the kind of rent assistance that you have. Do you think those people usually have a low income, a middle income, or a high income?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 1:
Low income
High income
Medium income
Other (specify)]

2. *Why* do the people who get rent assistance usually have a **[insert respondent's answer to 1]** income?

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

3. Do you work for pay?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 3:
Yes
No
Other (specify)]

[IF "YES" TO 3, ASK 4 -- ELSE SKIP TO 9.]

4. Does the amount of money you earn affect your rent in any way?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 4:
Yes
No
Other (specify)]

[IF "YES" TO 4, ASK 5 THROUGH 8 -- ELSE SKIP TO 14.]

5. *How* does the amount of money you earn affect your rent?

6. Why do you think your earnings are related to your rent in that way?

[PROBE: If they say it is because "those are the rules" or "it's based on a formula" or something similar, try to get them to explain *why* the rules/formula work that way.]

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

7. Suppose your earnings were to go up a lot this year – what effect would that have on your rent next year: would your rent go up, would it go down, or would it stay the same?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 7:
Go up
Go down
Stay same
Other (specify)]

8. Why would your rent **[insert respondent's answer to 7]**?

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

[IF "NO" TO 3, ASK 9 -- ELSE SKIP TO 14.]

9. *Imagine* that you did work for pay. Do you think the amount of money you earn would affect your rent in any way?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 9:
Yes
No
Other (specify)]

[IF "YES" TO 9, ASK 10 THROUGH 13 -- ELSE SKIP TO 14.]

10. *How* do you think the amount of money you earned would affect your rent?

11. Why do you think your earnings would affect your rent in that way?

[PROBE: If they say it is because "those are the rules" or "it's based on a formula" or something similar, try to get them to explain why the rules/formula work that way.]

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

12. Imagine your earnings went up a lot this year – what effect would that have on your rent next year: would your rent go up, would it go down, or would it stay the same?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 12:
Go up
Go down
Stay same
Other (specify)]

13. Why would your rent **[insert respondent's answer to 12]**?

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

14. Aside from work, do you get any money from another source, such as Social Security, SSI, child support, TANF or ADC, retirement savings, interest on a bank account, or any other source?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 14:
Yes
No
Other (specify)]

[IF "YES" 14, ASK 15 -- ELSE SKIP TO 20.]

15. Does the amount of money you get from these sources affect your rent in any way?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 15:
Yes
No
Other (specify)]

[IF "YES" TO 15, ASK 16 THROUGH 19 -- ELSE SKIP TO 25.]

16. *How* does the amount of money you get from these sources affect your rent?

17. Why do you think the money you get from these sources affects your rent in that way?

[PROBE: If they say it is because "that's the rules" or "it's based on a formula" or something similar, try to get them to explain why the rules/formula work that way.]

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

18. Suppose that the money you get from these sources goes up a lot this year – what effect would that have on your rent next year: would your rent go up, would it go down, or would it stay the same?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 18:
Go up
Go down
Stay same
Other (specify)]

19. Why would your rent **[insert respondent's answer to 18]**?

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

[IF "NO" 14, ASK 20 -- ELSE SKIP TO 25.]

20. Imagine that you did get money from these sources. Would the amount of money you get from these sources affect your rent in any way?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 20:
Yes
No
Other (specify)]

[IF "YES" TO 20, ASK 21 THROUGH 24 -- ELSE SKIP TO 25.]

21. *How* do you think the amount of money from these sources would affect your rent?

22. *Why* do you think the amount of money from these sources would affect your rent in that way?

[PROBE: If they say it is because "that's the rules" or "it's based on a formula" or something similar, try to get them to explain <u>why</u> the rules/formula are structured that way.]

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

23. Imagine that the money you get from these sources went up a lot this year – what effect would that have on your rent next year: would your rent go up, would it go down, or would it stay the same?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 23:
Go up
Go down
Stay same
Other (specify)]

24. Why would your rent **[insert respondent's answer to 23]**?

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

25. Now I would like to change the subject a little bit, and ask you about organizations that might help to pay for rent assistance. What organization provides the money that allows you to pay a reduced rent?

[PROBE to be more specific if the answer is vague, such as "the government", "the city", "the office", "the real estate company" – try to get the name of a specific organization. If an address is mentioned, get the tenant to name the organization.]

26. Explain how the money that **[insert organization named by respondent in 25]** provides allows you to pay a reduced rent – be as detailed as possible.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Now I'm going to read you some statements. For each statement, think about whether the statement is true for *you*, in *your own situation*. After I read each statement, I'll ask if you agree or disagree with the statement, how sure you feel about that, and why you agree or disagree.

Statement 1: "The amount of rent that you have to pay depends on your income." **[REPEAT STATEMENT 1 AS NEEDED]**

27. Would you agree with that or disagree?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 27:
Agree
Disagree
Other (specify)]

28. How sure are you of that – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 28:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

29. You just told me that you **[agreed / disagreed]** with the statement "The amount of rent that you have to pay depends on your income." *Why* do you **[agree / disagree]** with that statement? Be as specific as you can.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Statement 2: "If your income goes up one year, that will make your rent go up the next year."
[REPEAT STATEMENT 2 AS NEEDED]

30. Would you agree with that or disagree?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 30:
Agree
Disagree
Other (specify)]

31. How sure are you – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 31:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

32. You just told me that you **[agreed / disagreed]** with the statement "If your income goes up one year, that will make your rent go up the next year." *Why* do you **[agree / disagree]** with that statement? Be as specific as you can.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Statement 3: "The amount of your rent is fixed, and it would stay the same even if your income changed." **[REPEAT STATEMENT 3 AS NEEDED]**

33. Would you agree with that or disagree?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 33:
Agree
Disagree
Other (specify)]

34. How sure are you – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 34:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

35. You just told me that you **[agreed / disagreed]** with the statement "The amount of your rent is fixed, and it would stay the same even if your income changed." *Why* do you **[agree / disagree]** with that statement? Be as specific as you can.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Statement 4: "Government monies help to make your rent less expensive." **[REPEAT STATEMENT 4 AS NEEDED]**

36. Would you agree with that or disagree?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 36:
Agree
Disagree
Other (specify)]

37. How sure are you – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 37:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

38. You just told me that you **[agreed / disagreed]** with the statement "Government monies help to make your rent less expensive." *Why* do you **[agree / disagree]** with that statement? Be as specific as you can.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Statement 5: "Government monies help to pay for your housing." **[REPEAT STATEMENT 5 AS NEEDED]**

39. Would you agree with that or disagree?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 39:
Agree
Disagree
Other (specify)]

40.How sure are you – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 40:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

41. You just told me that you **[agreed / disagreed]** with the statement "Government monies help to pay for your housing." *Why* do you **[agree / disagree]** with that statement? Be as specific as you can.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Statement 6: "No organization contributes any money to help pay for your housing." **[REPEAT STATEMENT 6 AS NEEDED]**

[EXPLAIN: If respondent seems confused by the term "organization" and wants to know whether it refers to the government, tell them that the government is one kind of organization, but there may also be other kinds of organizations.]

42. Would you agree with that or disagree?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 42:
Agree
Disagree
Other (specify)]

43. How sure are you – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 43:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

44. You just told me that you **[agreed / disagreed]** with the statement "No organization contributes any money to help pay for your housing." *Why* do you **[agree / disagree]** with that statement? Be as specific as you can.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

[INTERVIEWER: ESTIMATE THE RESPONDENT'S AGE AND RACE/ETHNICITY, BASED ON WHAT YOU OBSERVED – DO NOT ASK.]

[ESTIMATE THE RESPONDENT'S AGE IN YEARS: _____]

[IS THE RESPONDENT'S ETHNICITY HISPANIC/LATINO?
Yes
No
Unclear]

[WHICH BEST DESCRIBES THE RESPONDENT'S RACE?
African American
White/Caucasian
Other
Unclear]

MODULE B

Module B

General instructions:
Notation in the questionnaire:

- Instructions to interviewers (including probes, skip patterns, etc.) are noted in **bolded square brackets ([ ])**. These are not read to respondents.
- Items that should be always be read verbatim (word-for-word) and not paraphrased are in quotation marks (" "). Aside from the items in quotation marks, interviewers may paraphrase if the respondent does not seem to understand a question. When paraphrasing, be very careful not to use any language or expression that the respondent might view as a hint of the desired answer.
- Items that should be emphasized when reading a question are in *italics*.

Writing respondents' answers:

- Write respondents' answers in the space below each question. Feel free to use the back of pages or the margins if that is helpful.
- Write in a way that will enable someone else (specifically, staff in Calverton, or the client) to read and understand respondents' answers.
- Write answers in a way that will enable the reader to understand the ideas, beliefs, and concepts that the respondent is trying to express in her/his answer. It is not necessary to write the answers verbatim or word-for-word; paraphrasing is acceptable, as long as the respondent's ideas are noted accurately and completely. Exception: Write verbatim, in quotation marks, any words (either technical or slang) that the respondent uses for: (1) **housing programs** (for example, "Section 8", "conventional"), (2) **housing offices** (for example, "the management office", "housing authority"), (3) **staff** involved with housing (for example, "manager", "housing counselor"), and (4) **recertification** of eligibility for rent assistance (for example, "yearly papers", "renewal").

Introduction:
According to our records, you get rent assistance. "Rent assistance" means that you pay a lower rent than most other people in your area who don't get rent assistance.

I am going to ask you some questions about things related to rent assistance. This isn't a test. The questions don't necessarily have just one right answer. We just want to know what *you* think the answers are.

Some of the questions are difficult. They're not things that people usually think about. Don't be surprised if you find it hard to answer some of them.

When I ask you a question, you don't have to answer quickly. Please take the time that you need to think about the answer. After you've thought about it, tell me the best answer you can think of. Even if you're not completely sure the answer is right, just tell me the best answer that you can think of. Again, there's not necessarily one right answer, we're just interested in what you think.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

1. Think about the time when you first applied to get rent assistance. Tell me everything that you can remember about the application process; be as detailed as possible.

[RESTATE if the respondent doesn't remember applying for rent assistance, by saying: "OK, then tell me everything that you remember about applying to live in the place you live now."]

[PROBE: If the respondent had to provide information as part of the application (i.e., answer questions, fill out forms, provide verification), ask the respondent to describe the information as specifically as possible.]

[IF THE RESPONDENT DOESN'T MENTION *TO WHOM S/HE APPLIED* IN ANSWERING 1, ASK 2 -- ELSE SKIP TO 3.]

2. *Who* did you go to in order to apply for rent assistance? Be as specific as possible.

[PROBE for more specificity if the answer is vague, for example "the government", "the city", "the office", "the real estate company" – try to get the name of a *specific organization*. If an address is mentioned, get the tenant to name the organization. If a person's name is mentioned, try to get the person's organization and title.]

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

3. Aside from the people to whom you applied, did *anyone else* help you with your application for rent assistance?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 3:
Yes
No
Other (specify)]

[IF "YES" TO 3, ASK 4 -- ELSE SKIP TO 5.]

4. Tell me *who* helped you, and *what* they did to help. Be as specific as possible.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

5. At the time you applied, did anyone explain to you how rent assistance works?

[INTERVIEWER: We are especially interested in explanations given by the housing authority and property management offices/companies.]

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 5:
Yes
No
Other (specify)]

[IF "YES" TO 5, ASK 6 AND 7 -- ELSE SKIP TO 8.]

6. Who explained rent assistance to you?

7. How did they explain rent assistance to you – tell me everything you can remember.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

[IF "NO" TO 5, ASK 8 AND 9 -- ELSE SKIP TO 10.]

8. At the time you applied, did you get any information explaining how rent assistance works? It could have been pamphlets, films, or anything else explaining how rent assistance works.

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 8:
Yes
No
Other (specify)]

[IF "YES" TO 8, ASK 9 – ELSE SKIP TO 10.]

9. How was rent assistance explained in the information – tell me everything you can remember.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

10. Now I'm going to change the subject a little bit and ask you why you are living in this building. I'd like to know how you came to live in *this particular* building. Tell me why you are living here instead of somewhere else.

[IF *WHO CHOSE THE BUILDING* IS NOT MENTIONED IN ANSWER TO 10, ASK 11 -- ELSE SKIP TO 12.]

11. Did you choose this building yourself, or did someone else choose the building for you?

[RESTATE if respondent says that someone else *recommended* the building, by saying: "OK, someone recommended this building to you; but what I'd really like to know is who decided that you would live in this building instead of some other building." THEN REPEAT QUESTION 11.]

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 11:
Respondent chose building
Someone else chose building
Other (specify)]

[IF *RESPONDENT CHOSE THE BUILDING*, ASK 12 -- ELSE SKIP TO 13.]

12. According to your answer, you were the one who chose this building. Does your rent assistance allow you to choose any building you want, or are you only allowed to live in certain buildings? Explain how it works in as much detail as possible.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

[IF *SOMEONE ELSE CHOSE THE BUILDING*, ASK 13 THROUGH 15 -- ELSE SKIP TO 16.]

13. Who chose this building for you?

14. How did they choose the building for you?

15. What would have happened if you refused to live in this building?

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

16. Now I'm going to read you some statements. For each statement, think about whether the statement is true for *you*, in *your own situation*. After I read each statement, I'll ask if you agree or disagree with the statement, how sure you feel about that, and why you agree or disagree.

Statement 1: "When you applied for rent assistance, you were asked to report your earnings from work." **[REPEAT STATEMENT 1 AS NEEDED]**

16. Would you agree with that or disagree?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 16:
Agree
Disagree
Other (specify)]

17. How sure are you – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 17:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Statement 2: "When you applied for rent assistance, you were asked to report any money that you had from other sources, such as Social Security, SSI, child support, TANF or ADC, retirement savings, interest on a bank account, or any other source." **[REPEAT STATEMENT 2 AS NEEDED]**

18. Would you agree with that or disagree?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 18:
Agree
Disagree
Other (specify)]

19. How sure are you – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 19:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Statement 3: "When you applied for rent assistance, you were asked to report the value of your furniture and your household appliances." **[REPEAT STATEMENT 3 AS NEEDED]**

20. Would you agree with that or disagree?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 20:
Agree
Disagree
Other (specify)]

21. How sure are you – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 21:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Statement 4: "Your kind of rent assistance can be used in any building that you choose."
[REPEAT STATEMENT 4 AS NEEDED]

22. Would you agree with that or disagree?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 22:
Agree
Disagree
Other (specify)]

23. How sure are you – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 23:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

24. You just told me that you **[agreed / disagreed]** with the statement "Your kind of rent assistance can be used in any building that you choose." *Why* do you **[agree / disagree]** with that statement? Be as specific as you can.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Statement 5: "Your kind of rent assistance only lets you to live in buildings that are chosen for you by the office that runs rent assistance." **[REPEAT STATEMENT 5 AS NEEDED]**

25. Would you agree with that or disagree?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 25:
Agree
Disagree
Other (specify)]

26. How sure are you – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 26:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

27. You just told me that you **[agreed / disagreed]** with the statement "Your kind of rent assistance only lets you to live in buildings that are chosen for you by the office that runs rent assistance." *Why* do you **[agree / disagree]** with that statement? Be as specific as you can.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Statement 6: "The building you live in is 'rent assisted,' meaning that everyone who lives in the building gets rent assistance." **[REPEAT STATEMENT 6 AS NEEDED]**

28. Would you agree with that or disagree?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 28:
Agree
Disagree
Other (specify)]

29. How sure are you – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 29:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

30. You just told me that you **[agreed / disagreed]** with the statement "The building you live in is 'rent assisted,' meaning that everyone who lives in the building gets rent assistance." *Why* do you **[agree / disagree]** with that statement? Be as specific as you can.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

31. "Which of the following best describes who you went to in order to apply for rent assistance:
    A. a Section 8 office,
    B. a state or local housing agency,
    C. a public housing authority,
    D. an apartment office,
    E. a building manager or landlord, or
    F. someone else (specify_____)" **[REPEAT AS NEEDED]**

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 31 ABOVE]

32. How sure are you – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 32:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

[INTERVIEWER: ESTIMATE THE RESPONDENT'S AGE AND RACE/ETHNICITY, BASED ON WHAT YOU OBSERVED – DO NOT ASK.]

[ESTIMATE THE RESPONDENT'S AGE IN YEARS: _____]

[IS THE RESPONDENT'S ETHNICITY HISPANIC/LATINO?
Yes
No
Unclear]

[WHICH BEST DESCRIBES THE RESPONDENT'S RACE?
African American
White/Caucasian
Other
Unclear]

MODULE C

Module C

General instructions:
Notation in the questionnaire:

- Instructions to interviewers (including probes, skip patterns, etc.) are noted in **bolded square brackets ([ ])**. These are not read to respondents.
- Items that should be always be read verbatim (word-for-word) and not paraphrased are in quotation marks (" "). Aside from the items in quotation marks, interviewers may paraphrase if the respondent does not seem to understand a question. When paraphrasing, be very careful not to use any language or expression that the respondent might view as a hint of the desired answer.
- Items that should be emphasized when reading a question are in *italics*.

Writing respondents' answers:

- Write respondents' answers in the space below each question. Feel free to use the back of pages or the margins if that is helpful.
- Write in a way that will enable someone else (specifically, staff in Calverton, or the client) to read and understand respondents' answers.
- Write answers in a way that will enable the reader to understand the ideas, beliefs, and concepts that the respondent is trying to express in her/his answer. It is not necessary to write the answers verbatim or word-for-word; paraphrasing is acceptable, as long as the respondent's ideas are noted accurately and completely. Exception: Write verbatim, in quotation marks, any words (either technical or slang) that the respondent uses for: (1) **housing programs** (for example, "Section 8", "conventional"), (2) **housing offices** (for example, "the management office", "housing authority"), (3) **staff** involved with housing (for example, "manager", "housing counselor"), and (4) **recertification** of eligibility for rent assistance (for example, "yearly papers", "renewal").

Introduction:
According to our records, you get rent assistance. "Rent assistance" means that you pay a lower rent than most other people in your area who don't get rent assistance.

I am going to ask you some questions about things related to rent assistance. This isn't a test. The questions don't necessarily have just one right answer. We just want to know what *you* think the answers are.

Some of the questions are difficult. They're not things that people usually think about. Don't be surprised if you find it hard to answer some of them.

When I ask you a question, you don't have to answer quickly. Please take the time that you need to think about the answer. After you've thought about it, tell me the best answer you can think of. Even if you're not completely sure the answer is right, just tell me the best answer that you can think of. Again, there's not necessarily one right answer, we're just interested in what you think.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

I'm going to start by asking you who owns this building.

1. What person or organization *owns* the building that you live in? Be as specific as possible.

[PROBE for more specificity if the answer is vague, for example, if the respondent says "the government", "the city", "the office", "the real estate company" – try to get the name of a *specific organization*. If an address is mentioned, get the respondent to name the organization. If a person's name is mentioned, try to get the person's *organization and title*.]

2. To what person or organization do you pay your rent? Be as specific as possible.

[PROBE for more specificity if the answer is vague, for example, if the respondent says "the government", "the city", "the office", "the real estate company" – try to get the name of a *specific organization*. If an address is mentioned, get the tenant to name the organization. If a person's name is mentioned, try to get the person's *organization and title*.]

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

[IF *METHOD OF PAYMENT* IS NOT STATED IN ANSWER TO 2, ASK 3 -- ELSE SKIP TO 4.]

3. Do you pay with cash, or a check, or in some other way?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 3:
Pay by cash
Pay by check
Other (specify)]

[IF THEY *PAY BY CHECK*, ASK 4 AND 5 -- ELSE SKIP TO 6.]

4. Who do you make the check out to?

5. Who do you take or send the check to?

[IF THEY PAY IN *CASH* OR A FORM *OTHER THAN CHECK*, ASK 6 -- ELSE SKIP TO 7.]

6. Who do you take or send your rent payment to?

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

7. Now I'm going to change the subject a little bit and ask some questions about things that you do each year to keep your rent assistance. Each year, do you have to do any paperwork, answer questions, or show documents in order to keep your rent assistance?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 7:
Yes
No
Other (specify)]

[IF "NO" TO 7, ASK 8 -- ELSE SKIP TO 10.]

8. Each year, do you have to do paperwork, answer questions, or show documents in order to renew your lease?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 8:
Yes
No
Other (specify)]

[IF "NO" TO 8, ASK 9 -- ELSE SKIP TO 10.]

9. Each year, do you have to do an audit, recertification, or other paperwork to keep your rent assistance or renew your lease?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 9:
Yes
No
Other (specify)]

[IF "NO" TO 9, SKIP TO 20 – ELSE CONTINUE TO 10.]

10. In your own words, what do you call this yearly process?

[IF RESPONDENT DOESN'T KNOW ANSWER TO 10, SAY:]

Say: "Some people call it a 'yearly renewal'. Let's call it that."

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

11. Think about the last time you did the **[insert respondent's name for recert., or "yearly renewal"]**. Tell me exactly what you did. Be as detailed as you can.

> **[PROBE: If the respondent had to provide information as part of the application (that is, answer questions, fill out forms, provide verification), ask the respondent to describe the information requested as specifically as possible.]**

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

[IF THE RESPONDENT DOES NOT MENTION *TO WHOM S/HE APPLIED* IN 11, ASK 12 -- ELSE SKIP TO 13.]

12. Again, think about the last time that you did the **[insert respondent's name for recert., or "yearly renewal"]**. With whom did you do the **[insert respondent's name for recert., or "yearly renewal"]**? Be as specific as possible.

[PROBE for more specificity if the answer is vague, for example, if the respondent says "the government", "the city", "the office", "the real estate company" – try to get the name of a *specific organization*. If an address is mentioned, get the tenant to name the organization. If a person's name is mentioned, try to get the person's *organization and title*.]

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

13. Again, think about the last time you did the **[insert respondent's name for recert., or "yearly renewal"]**. Aside from the people with whom you did the **[insert respondent's name for recert., or "yearly renewal"]**, did *anyone else* help you with the **[insert respondent's name for recert., or "yearly renewal"]**?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 13:
Yes
No
Other (specify)]

[IF "YES" TO 13, ASK 14 -- ELSE SKIP TO 15.]

14. Tell me *who* helped you, and *what* they did to help.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

15. The last time you did the **[insert respondent's name for recert., or "yearly renewal"]**, did anyone explain to you how rent assistance works?

[INTERVIEWER: We are especially interested in explanations given by the housing authority and property management offices/companies.]

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 15:
Yes
No
Other (specify)]

[IF "YES" TO 15, ASK 16 AND 17 -- ELSE SKIP TO 18.]

16. Who explained rent assistance to you?

17. How did they explain rent assistance to you – tell me everything you can remember.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

[IF "NO" TO 15, ASK 18 AND 19 -- ELSE SKIP TO 20.]

18. The last time you did the **[insert respondent's name for recert., or "yearly renewal"]**, did you get any information explaining how rent assistance works? It could have been pamphlets, films, or anything else explaining how rent assistance works.

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 18:
Yes
No
Other (specify)]

19. How was rent assistance explained in the information – tell me everything you can remember.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

20. Now I'm going to read you some statements. For each statement, think about whether the statement is true for *you*, in *your own situation*. After I read each statement, I'll ask if you agree or disagree with the statement, how sure you feel about that, and why you agree or disagree.

Statement 1: "The last time you did the **[insert respondent's name for recert., or "yearly renewal"]**, you were asked to report your earnings from work." **[REPEAT STATEMENT 1 AS NEEDED]**

21. Would you agree with that or disagree?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 21:
Agree
Disagree
Other (specify)]

22. How sure are you – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 22:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Statement 2: "The last time you did the **[insert respondent's name for recert., or "yearly renewal"]**, you were asked to report any money that you had from other sources, such as Social Security, SSI, child support, TANF or ADC, retirement savings, interest on a bank account, or any other source." **[REPEAT STATEMENT 2 AS NEEDED]**

23. Would you agree with that or disagree?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 23:
Agree
Disagree
Other (specify)]

24. How sure are you – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 24:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Statement 3: "The last time you did the **[insert respondent's name for recert., or "yearly renewal"]**, you were asked to report the value of your furniture and your household appliances." **[REPEAT STATEMENT 3 AS NEEDED]**

25. Would you agree with that or disagree?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 25:
Agree
Disagree
Other (specify)]

26. How sure are you – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 26:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

27. "Think about the last time you did the **[insert respondent's name for recert., or "yearly renewal"]**. Which of the following best describes *with whom* did you did the **[insert respondent's name for recert., or "yearly renewal"]**:

A. staff at a Section 8 office,
B. staff at a state or local housing agency,
C. staff at a public housing authority,
D. staff at an apartment office,
E. a building manager or landlord, or
F. someone else (specify_____)" **[REPEAT AS NEEDED]**

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 27 ABOVE.]

28. How sure are you – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 28:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

29. "Which of the following best describes who *owns* the building that you live in:
A. a Section 8 office,
B. a state or local housing agency,
C. a public housing authority,
D. an apartment office,
E. a building manager or landlord, or
F. someone else (specify_____)" **[REPEAT AS NEEDED]**

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 29 ABOVE.]

30. How sure are you – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 30:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

31. How do you know that they own the building – how did you find that out? Be as specific as you can.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

32. "Which of the following best describes who you pay your rent to:
    A. a Section 8 office,
    B. a state or local housing agency,
    C. a public housing authority,
    D. an apartment office,
    E. a building manager or landlord, or
    F. someone else (specify_____)" **[REPEAT AS NEEDED]**

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 32 ABOVE.]

33. How sure are you – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 33:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

[INTERVIEWER: ESTIMATE THE RESPONDENT'S AGE AND RACE/ETHNICITY, BASED ON WHAT YOU OBSERVED – DO NOT ASK.]

[ESTIMATE THE RESPONDENT'S AGE IN YEARS: _____]

[IS THE RESPONDENT'S ETHNICITY HISPANIC/LATINO?
Yes
No
Unclear]

[WHICH BEST DESCRIBES THE RESPONDENT'S RACE?
African American
White/Caucasian
Other
Unclear]

MODULE D

Module D

General instructions:
Notation in the questionnaire:

- Instructions to interviewers (including probes, skip patterns, etc.) are noted in **bolded square brackets ([ ])**. These are not read to respondents.
- Items that should be always be read verbatim (word-for-word) and not paraphrased are in quotation marks (" "). Aside from the items in quotation marks, interviewers may paraphrase if the respondent does not seem to understand a question. When paraphrasing, be very careful not to use any language or expression that the respondent might view as a hint of the desired answer.
- Items that should be emphasized when reading a question are in *italics*.

Writing respondents' answers:

- Write respondents' answers in the space below each question. Feel free to use the back of pages or the margins if that is helpful.
- Write in a way that will enable someone else (specifically, staff in Calverton, or the client) to read and understand respondents' answers.
- Write answers in a way that will enable the reader to understand the ideas, beliefs, and concepts that the respondent is trying to express in her/his answer. It is not necessary to write the answers verbatim or word-for-word; paraphrasing is acceptable, as long as the respondent's ideas are noted accurately and completely. Exception: Write verbatim, in quotation marks, any words (either technical or slang) that the respondent uses for: (1) **housing programs** (for example, "Section 8", "conventional"), (2) **housing offices** (for example, "the management office", "housing authority"), (3) **staff** involved with housing (for example, "manager", "housing counselor"), and (4) **recertification** of eligibility for rent assistance (for example, "yearly papers", "renewal").

Introduction:
According to our records, you get rent assistance. "Rent assistance" means that you pay a lower rent than most other people in your area who don't get rent assistance.

I am going to ask you some questions about things related to rent assistance. This isn't a test. The questions don't necessarily have just one right answer. We just want to know what *you* think the answers are.

Some of the questions are difficult. They're not things that people usually think about. Don't be surprised if you find it hard to answer some of them.

When I ask you a question, you don't have to answer quickly. Please take the time that you need to think about the answer. After you've thought about it, tell me the best answer you can think of. Even if you're not completely sure the answer is right, just tell me the best answer that you can think of. Again, there's not necessarily one right answer, we're just interested in what you think.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

First I'm going to ask you about some terms and what you think they may mean.

1. Have you ever heard the term "subsidized"?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 1:
Yes
No
Other (specify)]

[IF "YES" TO 1, ASK 2 THROUGH 4 -- ELSE SKIP TO 5.]

2. Tell me what you think "subsidized" means. Be as detailed as possible – tell me *everything* you can think of about "subsidized".

3. How sure are you that "subsidized" means what you just told me – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 3:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

4. How did you find out the meaning of "subsidized"?

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

5. Have you ever heard of "HUD"?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 5:
Yes
No
Other (specify)]

[IF "YES" TO 5, ASK 6 THROUGH 8 -- ELSE SKIP TO 9.]

6. Tell me what you think "HUD" means. Be as detailed as possible – tell me *everything* you can think of about "HUD".

7. How sure are you that "HUD" means what you just told me – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 7:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

8. How did you find out the meaning of "HUD"?

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

9. Have you ever heard of the "Low Income Housing Tax Credit"?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 9:
Yes
No
Other (specify)]

[IF "YES" TO 9, ASK 10 THROUGH 12 -- ELSE SKIP TO 13.]

10. Tell me what you think "Low Income Housing Tax Credit" means. Be as detailed as possible – tell me *everything* you can think of about "Low Income Housing Tax Credit".

11. How sure are you that "Low Income Housing Tax Credit" means what you just told me – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 11:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

12. How did you find out the meaning of "Low Income Housing Tax Credit"?

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

13. Have you ever heard of "government housing"?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 13:
Yes
No
Other (specify)]

[IF "YES" TO 13, ASK 14 THROUGH 16 -- ELSE SKIP TO 17.]

14. Tell me what you think "government housing" means. Be as detailed as possible – tell me *everything* you can think of about "government housing".

15. How sure are you that "government housing" means what you just told me – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 15:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

16. How did you find out the meaning of "government housing"?

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

17. Have you ever heard of "low income housing"?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 17:
Yes
No
Other (specify)]

[IF "YES" TO 17, ASK 18 THROUGH 20 -- ELSE SKIP TO 21.]

18. Tell me what you think "low income housing" means. Be as detailed as possible – tell me *everything* you can think of about "low income housing".

19. How sure are you that "low income housing" means what you just told me – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 19:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

20. How did you find out the meaning of "low income housing"?

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

21. Have you ever heard of "conventional housing"?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 21:
Yes
No
Other (specify)]

[IF "YES" TO 21, ASK 22 THROUGH 24 -- ELSE SKIP TO 25.]

22. Tell me what you think "conventional housing" means. Be as detailed as possible – tell me *everything* you can think of about "conventional housing".

23. How sure are you that "conventional housing" means what you just told me – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 23:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

24. How did you find out the meaning of "conventional housing"?

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

25. Have you ever heard of "the projects"?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 25:
Yes
No
Other (specify)]

[IF "YES" TO 25, ASK 26 THROUGH 28 -- ELSE SKIP TO 29.]

26. Tell me what you think "the projects" means. Be as detailed as possible – tell me *everything* you can think of about "the projects".

27. How sure are you that "the projects" means what you just told me – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 27:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

28. How did you find out the meaning of "the projects"?

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

29. Have you ever heard of "Public Housing".

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 29:
Yes
No
Other (specify)]

[IF "YES" TO 29, ASK 30 THROUGH 32 -- ELSE SKIP TO 33.]

30. Tell me what you think "Public Housing" means. Be as detailed as possible – tell me *everything* you can think of about "Public Housing".

31. How sure are you that "Public Housing" means what you just told me – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 31:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

32. How did you find out the meaning of "Public Housing"?

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

33. Have you ever heard of "housing vouchers"?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 33:
Yes
No
Other (specify)]

[IF "YES" TO 33, ASK 34 THROUGH 36 -- ELSE SKIP TO 37.]

34. Tell me what you think "housing vouchers" means. Be as detailed as possible – tell me *everything* you can think of about "housing vouchers".

35. How sure are you that "housing vouchers" means what you just told me – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 35:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

36. How did you find out the meaning of "housing vouchers"?

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

37. Have you ever heard of "LIHTC"?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 37:
Yes
No
Other (specify)]

[IF "YES" TO 37, ASK 38 THROUGH 40 -- ELSE SKIP TO 41.]

38. Tell me what you think "LIHTC" means. Be as detailed as possible – tell me *everything* you can think of about "LIHTC".

39. How sure are you that "LIHTC" means what you just told me – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 39:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

40. How did you find out the meaning of "LIHTC"?

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

41. Have you ever heard of "Section 8"?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 41:
Yes
No
Other (specify)]

[IF "YES" TO 41, ASK 42 THROUGH 44 -- ELSE SKIP TO 45.]

42. Tell me what you think "Section 8" means. Be as detailed as possible – tell me *everything* you can think of about "Section 8".

43. How sure are you that "Section 8" means what you just told me – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 43:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

44. How did you find out the meaning of "Section 8"?

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

45. Have you ever heard of the "Housing Choice Voucher Program".

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 45:
Yes
No
Other (specify)]

[IF "YES" TO 45, ASK 46 THROUGH 48 -- ELSE SKIP TO 49.]

46. Tell me what you think "Housing Choice Voucher Program" means. Be as detailed as possible – tell me *everything* you can think of about "Housing Choice Voucher Program".

47. How sure are you that "Housing Choice Voucher Program" means what you just told me – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 47:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

48. How did you find out the meaning of "Housing Choice Voucher Program"?

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

49. Have you ever heard of a "Public Housing Authority"?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 49:
Yes
No
Other (specify)]

[IF "YES" TO 49, ASK 50 THROUGH 52 -- ELSE SKIP TO 53.]

50. Tell me what you think "Public Housing Authority" means. Be as detailed as possible – tell me *everything* you can think of about "Public Housing Authority".

51. How sure are you that "Public Housing Authority" means what you just told me – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 51:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

52. How did you find out the meaning of "Public Housing Authority"?

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

53. Have you ever heard of a "Section 8 office"?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 53:
Yes
No
Other (specify)]

[IF "YES" TO 53, ASK 54 THROUGH 56 -- ELSE SKIP TO 57.]

54. Tell me what you think "Section 8 office" means. Be as detailed as possible – tell me *everything* you can think of about "Section 8 office".

55. How sure are you that "Section 8 office" means what you just told me – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 55:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

56. How did you find out the meaning of "Section 8 office"?

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

57. Now I'm going to read you some statements. After I read each statement, I'll ask if you agree or disagree with the statement, how sure you feel about that, and why you agree or disagree.

Statement 1: "Public housing authorities are run by the government." **[REPEAT STATEMENT 1 AS NEEDED]**

58. Would you agree with that or disagree?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 58:
Agree
Disagree
Other (specify)]

59. How sure are you – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 59:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

60. You just told me that you **[agreed / disagreed]** with the statement "Public housing authorities are run by the government." Why do you **[agree / disagree]** with that statement? Be as specific as you can.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Statement 2: "Public housing authorities are organizations that provide rent assistance."
[REPEAT STATEMENT 2 AS NEEDED]

61. Would you agree with that or disagree?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 61:
Agree
Disagree
Other (specify)]

62. How sure are you – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 62:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

63. You just told me that you **[agreed / disagreed]** with the statement "Public housing authorities are organizations that provide rent assistance." Why do you **[agree / disagree]** with that statement? Be as specific as you can.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Statement 3: "Section 8 offices are run by the government." **[REPEAT STATEMENT 3 AS NEEDED]**

64. Would you agree with that or disagree?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 64:
Agree
Disagree
Other (specify)]

65. How sure are you – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 65:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

66. You just told me that you **[agreed / disagreed]** with the statement "Section 8 offices are run by the government." Why do you **[agree / disagree]** with that statement? Be as specific as you can.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Statement 4: "Section 8 offices are organizations that provide rent assistance." **[REPEAT STATEMENT 4 AS NEEDED]**

67. Would you agree with that or disagree?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 67:
Agree
Disagree
Other (specify)]

68. How sure are you – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 68:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

69. You just told me that you **[agreed / disagreed]** with the statement "Section 8 offices are organizations that provide rent assistance." Why do you **[agree / disagree]** with that statement? Be as specific as you can.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Statement 5: "Housing vouchers are a type of Section 8 rent assistance." **[REPEAT STATEMENT 5 AS NEEDED]**

70. Would you agree with that or disagree?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 70:
Agree
Disagree
Other (specify)]

71. How sure are you – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 71:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

72. You just told me that you **[agreed / disagreed]** with the statement "Housing vouchers are a type of Section 8 rent assistance." Why do you **[agree / disagree]** with that statement? Be as specific as you can.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Statement 6: "Some people who live in Section 8 buildings do not have a housing voucher."
[REPEAT STATEMENT 6 AS NEEDED]

73. Would you agree with that or disagree?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 73:
Agree
Disagree
Other (specify)]

74. How sure are you – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 74:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

75. You just told me that you **[agreed / disagreed]** with the statement "Some people who live in Section 8 buildings do not have a housing voucher." Why do you **[agree / disagree]** with that statement? Be as specific as you can.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Statement 7: " 'The projects' is another name for Public Housing." **[REPEAT STATEMENT 7 AS NEEDED]**

76. Would you agree with that or disagree?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 76:
Agree
Disagree
Other (specify)]

77. How sure are you – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 77:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

78. You just told me that you **[agreed / disagreed]** with the statement " 'The projects' is another name for Public Housing." Why do you **[agree / disagree]** with that statement? Be as specific as you can.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Statement 8: " 'The projects' is another name for Section 8 housing." **[REPEAT STATEMENT 8 AS NEEDED]**

79. Would you agree with that or disagree?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 79:
Agree
Disagree
Other (specify)]

80. How sure are you – really sure, kind of sure, not so sure?

[CIRCLE ANSWER TO 80:
Really sure
Kind of sure
Not so sure
Other (specify)]

81. You just told me that you **[agreed / disagreed]** with the statement " 'The projects' is another name for Section 8 housing." Why do you **[agree / disagree]** with that statement? Be as specific as you can.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

[INTERVIEWER: ESTIMATE THE RESPONDENT'S AGE AND RACE/ETHNICITY, BASED ON WHAT YOU OBSERVED – DO NOT ASK.]

[ESTIMATE THE RESPONDENT'S AGE IN YEARS: _____]

[IS THE RESPONDENT'S ETHNICITY HISPANIC/LATINO?
Yes
No
Unclear]

[WHICH BEST DESCRIBES THE RESPONDENT'S RACE?
African American
White/Caucasian
Other
Unclear]

WAVE 2.
COGNITIVE STUDY INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS
(FORMS FOR MODULES A, B, C, AND D)

MODULE A

Module A

General instructions:
Notation in the questionnaire:

- Instructions to interviewers are noted in **bold**. These are not read to respondents.
- Items that should always be read verbatim (word-for-word) and not paraphrased are in quotation marks (" "). Aside from the items in quotation marks, interviewers may paraphrase if the respondent does not seem to understand a question. When paraphrasing, be very careful not to use any language or expression that the respondent might view as a hint of the desired answer.

Writing respondents' answers:

- Write respondents' answers in the space below each question, or circle the answer for "yes/no" and multiple choice questions. Feel free to use the back of pages or the margins if that is helpful.
- Write in a way that will enable someone else (specifically, staff in Calverton, or the client) to read and understand respondents' answers.
- Write answers in a way that will enable the reader to understand the ideas, beliefs, and concepts that the respondent is trying to express in her/his answer. It is not necessary to write the answers verbatim or word-for-word; paraphrasing is acceptable, as long as the respondent's ideas are noted accurately and completely. Exception: Write verbatim, in quotation marks, any words (either technical or slang) that the respondent uses for: (1) **housing programs** (for example, "Section 8", "conventional"), (2) **housing offices** (for example, "the management office", "housing authority"), (3) **staff** involved with housing (for example, "manager", "housing counselor"), and (4) **recertification** of eligibility for rent assistance (for example, "yearly papers", "renewal").

General introduction:

According to our records, you get rent assistance. "Rent assistance" means that you pay a lower rent than most other people in your area who don't get rent assistance.

I am going to ask you some questions about things related to rent assistance. This isn't a test. The questions don't necessarily have just one right answer. We just want to know what *you* think the answers are.

Some of the questions are difficult. They're not things that people usually think about. Don't be surprised if you find it hard to answer some of them.

When I ask you a question, you don't have to answer quickly. Please take the time that you need to think about the answer. After you've thought about it, tell me the best answer you can think of. Even if you're not completely sure the answer is right, just tell me the best answer that you can think of. Again, there's not necessarily one right answer, we're just interested in what you think.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Introduction to Part I:

In the first part of the interview, I am going to ask you some "yes / no" or multiple choice questions. Please give me the best answers that you can think of.

1. "Each year, is someone in your household required to do a recertification to determine the amount of your rent?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(99) Refused

2. "Is your rent determined based on your household income?"

CRICLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(99) Refused

3. "Does the government help to pay for your rent?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(99) Refused

4. "Is the building owned by a housing authority?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(99) Refused

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

5. "Did a housing authority assign this address to your household?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(99) Refused

6. "Does your household have a voucher that allows you to choose where you live?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(99) Refused

7. "Is the building on Section 8?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(99) Refused

8. "Does the owner of the building receive a low income housing tax credit?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(99) Refused

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

AFTER ALL OF THE QUESTIONS IN PART I HAVE BEEN ANSWERED, CIRCLE THE INTERVIEWEE'S ANSWERS ON THE "QUESTION SHEET," AND THEN HAND THE "QUESTION SHEET" TO THE INTERVIEWEE.

Introduction to Part II:

Now I am going to ask you some things about the answers that you gave. At this time, I'm going to give you a list of the questions that I just asked, so that you can look at them while I ask you the next questions. I have circled your answers on the sheet.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

First let's talk about your answer to Question number 1. You answered Question 1 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  [CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure]

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

- What do you think "household" means in Question 1?

- What do you think "recertification" means in Question 1?

- Tell me how Question 1 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Now let's talk about your answer to Question number 2. You answered Question 2 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  [CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure]

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

- What do you think "income" means in Question 2?

- Tell me how Question 2 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Now let's talk about your answer to Question number 3. You answered Question 3 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  [CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure]

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

- What do you think "the government" means in Question 3?

- Tell me how Question 3 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Now let's talk about your answer to Question number 4. You answered Question 4 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  [CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure]

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

- What do you think "housing authority" means in Question 4?

- Tell me how Question 4 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Now let's talk about your answer to Question number 5. You answered Question 5 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  [CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure]

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

- What do you think "assign" means in Question 5?

- Tell me how Question 5 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Now let's talk about your answer to Question number 6. You answered Question 6 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  [CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure]

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

- What do you think "voucher" means in Question 6?

- Tell me how Question 6 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Now let's talk about your answer to Question number 7. You answered Question 7 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  [CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure]

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

- What do you think "Section 8" means in Question 7?

- Tell me how Question 7 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Now let's talk about your answer to Question number 8. You answered Question 8 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  [CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure]

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

- What do you think "low income housing tax credit" means in Question 8?

- Tell me how Question 8 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

QUESTION SHEET

1. Each year, is someone in your **household** required to do a **recertification** to determine the amount of your rent?
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know

2. Is your rent determined based on your household **income**?
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know

3. Does **the government** help to pay for your rent?
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know

4. Is the building owned by a **housing authority**?
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know

5. Did a housing authority **assign** this address to your household?
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know

6. Does your household have a **voucher** that allows you to choose where you live?
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know

7. Is the building on **Section 8**?
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know

8. Does the owner of the building receive a **low income housing tax credit**?
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know

MODULE B

Module B

General instructions:
Notation in the questionnaire:

- Instructions to interviewers are noted in **bold**. These are not read to respondents.
- Items that should always be read verbatim (word-for-word) and not paraphrased are in quotation marks (" "). Aside from the items in quotation marks, interviewers may paraphrase if the respondent does not seem to understand a question. When paraphrasing, be very careful not to use any language or expression that the respondent might view as a hint of the desired answer.

Writing respondents' answers:

- Write respondents' answers in the space below each question, or circle the answer for "yes/no" and multiple choice questions. Feel free to use the back of pages or the margins if that is helpful.
- Write in a way that will enable someone else (specifically, staff in Calverton, or the client) to read and understand respondents' answers.
- Write answers in a way that will enable the reader to understand the ideas, beliefs, and concepts that the respondent is trying to express in her/his answer. It is not necessary to write the answers verbatim or word-for-word; paraphrasing is acceptable, as long as the respondent's ideas are noted accurately and completely. Exception: Write verbatim, in quotation marks, any words (either technical or slang) that the respondent uses for: (1) **housing programs** (for example, "Section 8", "conventional"), (2) **housing offices** (for example, "the management office", "housing authority"), (3) **staff** involved with housing (for example, "manager", "housing counselor"), and (4) **recertification** of eligibility for rent assistance (for example, "yearly papers", "renewal").

General introduction:

According to our records, you get rent assistance. "Rent assistance" means that you pay a lower rent than most other people in your area who don't get rent assistance.

I am going to ask you some questions about things related to rent assistance. This isn't a test. The questions don't necessarily have just one right answer. We just want to know what *you* think the answers are.

Some of the questions are difficult. They're not things that people usually think about. Don't be surprised if you find it hard to answer some of them.

When I ask you a question, you don't have to answer quickly. Please take the time that you need to think about the answer. After you've thought about it, tell me the best answer you can think of. Even if you're not completely sure the answer is right, just tell me the best answer that you can think of. Again, there's not necessarily one right answer, we're just interested in what you think.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Introduction to Part I:

In the first part of the interview, I am going to ask you some "yes / no" or multiple choice questions. Please give me the best answers that you can think of.

2. "Each year, is someone in your household required to do a recertification or renewal to determine the amount of your rent?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(99) Refused

2. "Is the amount of your rent based on your household income?"

CRICLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(100) Refused

3. "Does the government help to pay for the costs of your rent?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(100) Refused

4. "Is the building that you live in owned by a housing authority?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(99) Refused

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

5. "How did you come to live here? Did a housing authority assign this address to your household?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(100) Refused

6. "Does your household have a voucher that allows you to choose the building that you live in?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(99) Refused

7. "Do you live in a Section 8 building?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(99) Refused

8. "Does the owner of the building receive a tax credit for providing affordable housing?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(100) Refused

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

AFTER ALL OF THE QUESTIONS IN PART I HAVE BEEN ANSWERED, CIRCLE THE INTERVIEWEE'S ANSWERS ON THE "QUESTION SHEET," AND THEN HAND THE "QUESTION SHEET" TO THE INTERVIEWEE.

Introduction to Part II:

Now I am going to ask you some things about the answers that you gave. At this time, I'm going to give you a list of the questions that I just asked, so that you can look at them while I ask you the next questions. I have circled your answers on the sheet.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

First let's talk about your answer to Question number 1. You answered Question 1 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  [CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure]

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

- What do you think "household" means in Question 1?

- What do you think "recertification" means in Question 1?

- What do you think "renewal" means in Question 1?

- Tell me how Question 1 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Now let's talk about your answer to Question number 2. You answered Question 2 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  [CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure]

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

- What do you think "income" means in Question 2?

- Tell me how Question 2 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Now let's talk about your answer to Question number 3. You answered Question 3 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  [CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure]

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

- What do you think "the government" means in Question 3?

- Tell me how Question 3 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Now let's talk about your answer to Question number 4. You answered Question 4 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  [CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure]

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

- What do you think "housing authority" means in Question 4?

- Tell me how Question 4 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Now let's talk about your answer to Question number 5. You answered Question 5 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  [CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure]

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

- What do you think "assign" means in Question 5?

- Tell me how Question 5 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Now let's talk about your answer to Question number 6. You answered Question 6 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  [CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure]

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

- What do you think "voucher" means in Question 6?

- Tell me how Question 6 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Now let's talk about your answer to Question number 7. You answered Question 7 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  [CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure]

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

- What do you think "Section 8" means in Question 7?

- Tell me how Question 7 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Now let's talk about your answer to Question number 8. You answered Question 8 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  [CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure]

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

- What do you think "tax credit" means in Question 8?

- What do you think "affordable housing" means in Question 8?

- Tell me how Question 8 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

QUESTION SHEET

2. Each year, is someone in your **household** required to do a **recertification** or **renewal** to determine the amount of your rent?
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know

2. Is the amount of your rent based on your household **income**?
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know

3. Does **the government** help to pay for the costs of your rent?
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know

4. Is the building that you live in owned by a **housing authority**?
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know

5. How did you come to live here? Did a housing authority **assign** this address to your household?
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know

6. Does your household have a **voucher** that allows you to choose the building that you live in?
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know

7. Do you live in a **Section 8** building?
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know

8. Does the owner of the building receive a **tax credit** for providing **affordable housing**?
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know

MODULE C

Module C

General instructions:
Notation in the questionnaire:

- Instructions to interviewers are noted in **bold**. These are not read to respondents.
- Items that should always be read verbatim (word-for-word) and not paraphrased are in quotation marks (" "). Aside from the items in quotation marks, interviewers may paraphrase if the respondent does not seem to understand a question. When paraphrasing, be very careful not to use any language or expression that the respondent might view as a hint of the desired answer.

Writing respondents' answers:

- Write respondents' answers in the space below each question, or circle the answer for "yes/no" and multiple choice questions. Feel free to use the back of pages or the margins if that is helpful.
- Write in a way that will enable someone else (specifically, staff in Calverton, or the client) to read and understand respondents' answers.
- Write answers in a way that will enable the reader to understand the ideas, beliefs, and concepts that the respondent is trying to express in her/his answer. It is not necessary to write the answers verbatim or word-for-word; paraphrasing is acceptable, as long as the respondent's ideas are noted accurately and completely. Exception: Write verbatim, in quotation marks, any words (either technical or slang) that the respondent uses for: (1) **housing programs** (for example, "Section 8", "conventional"), (2) **housing offices** (for example, "the management office", "housing authority"), (3) **staff** involved with housing (for example, "manager", "housing counselor"), and (4) **recertification** of eligibility for rent assistance (for example, "yearly papers", "renewal").

General introduction:

According to our records, you get rent assistance. "Rent assistance" means that you pay a lower rent than most other people in your area who don't get rent assistance.

I am going to ask you some questions about things related to rent assistance. This isn't a test. The questions don't necessarily have just one right answer. We just want to know what *you* think the answers are.

Some of the questions are difficult. They're not things that people usually think about. Don't be surprised if you find it hard to answer some of them.

When I ask you a question, you don't have to answer quickly. Please take the time that you need to think about the answer. After you've thought about it, tell me the best answer you can think of. Even if you're not completely sure the answer is right, just tell me the best answer that you can think of. Again, there's not necessarily one right answer, we're just interested in what you think.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Introduction to Part I:

In the first part of the interview, I am going to ask you some "yes / no" or multiple choice questions. Please give me the best answers that you can think of.

3. "Each year, is someone in your household required to do a recertification or renewal to determine whether your rent will stay the same?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(99) Refused

2. "If your household had an increase in income, would that cause your rent to go up?"

CRICLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(101) Refused

3. "Does the government or HUD help to pay for the costs of your rent?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(101) Refused

4. "Who owns the building – is it a housing authority, a landlord or property management company, or someone else?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Housing authority
(2) Landlord or property manager
(3) Someone else (Specify)_____
(88) Don't know
(99) Refused

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

5. "How did you come to live here? Did a housing authority assign this address or apartment to your household?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(101) Refused

6. "Does your household have a voucher or other type of rent assistance that allows you to choose the building that you live in?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(99) Refused

7. "Is the building that you live in a Section 8 building?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(99) Refused

8. "Does the owner of the building receive a tax credit for providing affordable housing to low income individuals?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(101) Refused

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

AFTER ALL OF THE QUESTIONS IN PART I HAVE BEEN ANSWERED, CIRCLE THE INTERVIEWEE'S ANSWERS ON THE "QUESTION SHEET," AND THEN HAND THE "QUESTION SHEET" TO THE INTERVIEWEE.

Introduction to Part II:

Now I am going to ask you some things about the answers that you gave. At this time, I'm going to give you a list of the questions that I just asked, so that you can look at them while I ask you the next questions. I have circled your answers on the sheet.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

First let's talk about your answer to Question number 1. You answered Question 1 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  [CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure]

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

- What do you think "household" means in Question 1?

- What do you think "recertification" means in Question 1?

- What do you think "renewal" means in Question 1?

- Tell me how Question 1 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Now let's talk about your answer to Question number 2. You answered Question 2 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  [CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure]

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

- What do you think "income" means in Question 2?

- Tell me how Question 2 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Now let's talk about your answer to Question number 3. You answered Question 3 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  [CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure]

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

- What do you think "the government" means in Question 3?

- What do you think "HUD" means in Question 3?

- Tell me how Question 3 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Now let's talk about your answer to Question number 4. You answered Question 4 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  [CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure]

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

- What do you think "housing authority" means in Question 4?

- What do you think "landlord" means in Question 4?

- What do you think "property management company" means in Question 4?

- Tell me how Question 4 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Now let's talk about your answer to Question number 5. You answered Question 5 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  [CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure]

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

- What do you think "assign" means in Question 5?

- Tell me how Question 5 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Now let's talk about your answer to Question number 6. You answered Question 6 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  [CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure]

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

- What do you think "voucher" means in Question 6?

- Tell me how Question 6 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Now let's talk about your answer to Question number 7. You answered Question 7 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  [CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure]

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

- What do you think "Section 8" means in Question 7?

- Tell me how Question 7 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Now let's talk about your answer to Question number 8. You answered Question 8 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  [CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure]

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

- What do you think "tax credit" means in Question 8?

- What do you think "affordable housing" means in Question 8?

- Tell me how Question 8 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

QUESTION SHEET

1. Each year, is someone in your **household** required to do a **recertification** or **renewal** to determine whether your rent will stay the same?
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know

2. If your household had an increase in **income**, would that cause your rent to go up?
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know

3. Does **the government** or **HUD** help to pay for the costs of your rent?
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know

4. Who owns the building – is it a **housing authority**, a **landlord** or **property management company**, or someone else?
(1) Housing authority
(2) Landlord or property management company
(3) Someone else (Specify)_____
(88) Don't know

5. How did you come to live here? Did a housing authority **assign** this address or apartment to your household?
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know

6. Does your household have a **voucher** or other type of rent assistance that allows you to choose the building that you live in?
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know

7. Is the building that you live in a **Section 8** building?
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know

8. Does the owner of the building receive a **tax credit** for providing **affordable housing** to low income individuals?
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know

MODULE D

Module D

General instructions:
Notation in the questionnaire:

- Instructions to interviewers are noted in **bold**. These are not read to respondents.
- Items that should always be read verbatim (word-for-word) and not paraphrased are in quotation marks (" "). Aside from the items in quotation marks, interviewers may paraphrase if the respondent does not seem to understand a question. When paraphrasing, be very careful not to use any language or expression that the respondent might view as a hint of the desired answer.

Writing respondents' answers:

- Write respondents' answers in the space below each question, or circle the answer for "yes/no" and multiple choice questions. Feel free to use the back of pages or the margins if that is helpful.
- Write in a way that will enable someone else (specifically, staff in Calverton, or the client) to read and understand respondents' answers.
- Write answers in a way that will enable the reader to understand the ideas, beliefs, and concepts that the respondent is trying to express in her/his answer. It is not necessary to write the answers verbatim or word-for-word; paraphrasing is acceptable, as long as the respondent's ideas are noted accurately and completely. Exception: Write verbatim, in quotation marks, any words (either technical or slang) that the respondent uses for: (1) **housing programs** (for example, "Section 8", "conventional"), (2) **housing offices** (for example, "the management office", "housing authority"), (3) **staff** involved with housing (for example, "manager", "housing counselor"), and (4) **recertification** of eligibility for rent assistance (for example, "yearly papers", "renewal").

General introduction:

According to our records, you get rent assistance. "Rent assistance" means that you pay a lower rent than most other people in your area who don't get rent assistance.

I am going to ask you some questions about things related to rent assistance. This isn't a test. The questions don't necessarily have just one right answer. We just want to know what *you* think the answers are.

Some of the questions are difficult. They're not things that people usually think about. Don't be surprised if you find it hard to answer some of them.

When I ask you a question, you don't have to answer quickly. Please take the time that you need to think about the answer. After you've thought about it, tell me the best answer you can think of. Even if you're not completely sure the answer is right, just tell me the best answer that you can think of. Again, there's not necessarily one right answer, we're just interested in what you think.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Introduction to Part I:

In the first part of the interview, I am going to ask you some "yes / no" or multiple choice questions. Please give me the best answers that you can think of.

1. "As a part of your rental agreement, does someone in your household need to answer questions about your household's income whenever your lease is up for renewal?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(99) Refused

2. "To whom does someone in your household report your household's income--"
***** READ THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES TO THE RESPONDENT *****

CRICLE ANSWER:
(1) "A building manager or landlord"
(2) "A public housing authority or a state or local housing agency?"
(3) "Or, someone else?" **Specify**_____
(88) Don't know * DO NOT READ THIS ONE *****
(102) Refused * DO NOT READ THIS ONE *****

3. "Does your household pay a lower rent because the government is paying part of the cost of the unit?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(102) Refused

4. "Is the building owned by a public housing authority?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(103) Refused

5. "How did your household come to live here? Did someone in your household apply on their own to the management here, or did an agency, such as public housing authority assign this address to your household?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Applied to management on own
(2) Assigned to specific address
(88) Don't know
(102) Refused

6. "Did a public housing authority, or some similar agency, give you a certificate or voucher to help pay the rent for the place where you live?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(99) Refused

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

AFTER ALL OF THE QUESTIONS IN PART I HAVE BEEN ANSWERED, CIRCLE THE INTERVIEWEE'S ANSWERS ON THE "QUESTION SHEET," AND THEN HAND THE "QUESTION SHEET" TO THE INTERVIEWEE.

Introduction to Part II:

Now I am going to ask you some things about the answers that you gave. At this time, I'm going to give you a list of the questions that I just asked, so that you can look at them while I ask you the next questions. I have circled your answers on the sheet.

First let's talk about your answer to Question number 1. You answered Question 1 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  [CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure]

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

- What do you think "rental agreement" means in Question 1?

- What do you think "household" means in Question 1?

- What do you think "income" means in Question 1?

- What do you think "renewal" means in Question 1?

- Tell me how Question 1 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Now let's talk about your answer to Question number 2. You answered Question 2 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  [CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure]

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

- What do you think "building manager" means in Question 2?

- What do you think "landlord" means in Question 2?

- What do you think "state or local housing agency" means in Question 2?

- Tell me how Question 2 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

Now let's talk about your answer to Question number 3. You answered Question 3 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  [CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure]

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

- What do you think "the government" means in Question 3?

- Tell me how Question 3 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Now let's talk about your answer to Question number 4. You answered Question 4 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  [CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure]

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

- What do you think "public housing authority" means in Question 4?

- Tell me how Question 4 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

Now let's talk about your answer to Question number 5. You answered Question 5 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  [CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure]

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

- What do you think "the management" means in Question 5?

- What do you think "assign" means in Question 5?

- Tell me how Question 5 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

Respondent name _____ Interviewer _____
Interview date _____

Now let's talk about your answer to Question number 6. You answered Question 6 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  [CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure]

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

- What do you think "certificate" means in Question 6?

- What do you think "voucher" means in Question 6?

- Tell me how Question 6 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

QUESTION SHEET

1. As a part of your **rental agreement**, does someone in your **household** need to answer questions about your household's **income** whenever your lease is up for **renewal**?
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know

2. To whom does someone in your household report your household's income--
(1) A **building manager** or **landlord**?
(2) A public housing authority or a **state or local housing agency**?
(3) Or, someone else? Specify_____
(88) Don't know

3. Does your household pay a lower rent because **the government** is paying part of the cost of the unit?
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know

4. Is the building owned by a **public housing authority**?
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know

5. How did your household come to live here? Did someone in your household apply on their own to **the management** here, or did an agency, such as public housing authority **assign** this address to your household?
(1) Applied to management on own
(2) Assigned to specific address
(88) Don't know

6. Did a public housing authority, or some similar agency, give you a **certificate** or **voucher** to help pay the rent for the place where you live?
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know

Appendix C:

THE SCREENER QUESTIONNAIRE (CURRENT AHS QUESTIONS)

THE COGNITIVE QUESTIONNAIRE

THE SCREENER QUESTIONNAIRE (CURRENT AHS QUESTIONS)

OMB Control # 2528-0226
Expiration Date: 5/31/06

The Screener Questionnaire

Hi, this is _____ from ORC Macro, and I am conducting an interview on the behalf of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. This information is being collected to improve programs for individuals who need help paying for their rent. Your answers will remain confidential. No results from this study will be released in a way that would enable others to know your individual answers. Your answers will not affect your receipt of government benefits.

1. Are you 16 years of age or older?
   (1) Yes
   (2) No **SKIP TO CONCLUSION**
   (99) Other answer **SKIP TO CONCLUSION**
2. Is the place where you live owned or being bought by someone in your household?
   (1) Yes **SKIP TO CONCLUSION**
   (2) No
   (99) Other answer
3. Is the place where you live rented for cash rent?
   (1) Yes **SKIP TO 5**
   (2) No
   (99) Other answer
4. Is the place where you live occupied without payment of cash rent?
   (1) Yes
   (2) No **SKIP TO CONCLUSION**
   (99) Other answer **SKIP TO CONCLUSION**
5. As a part of your rental agreement, does someone in your household need to answer questions about your household's income whenever your lease is up for renewal?
   (1) Yes
   (2) No **SKIP TO 7**
   (99) Other answer **SKIP TO 7**

6. To whom does someone in your household report your household's income--

***** READ THESE CATEGORIES TO THE RESPONDENT *****

(1) A building manager or landlord?

(2) A public housing authority or a state or local housing agency? **SKIP TO 8**

(3) Or, someone else? Specify_____

(99) Other answer ***** DO NOT READ THIS ONE *****

7. Does your household pay a lower rent because the government is paying part of the cost of the unit?

(1) Yes

(2) No **SKIP TO 11**

(99) Other answer

8. Is the building owned by a housing authority?

(1) Yes **SKIP TO 11**

(2) No

(99) Other answer

9. How did your household come to live here? Did someone in your household apply on their own to the management here, or did an agency, such as a housing authority assign this address to your household?

(1) Applied to management on own

(2) Assigned to specific address **SKIP TO 11**

(99) Other answer

10. Did a housing authority, or some similar agency, give you a certificate or voucher to help pay the rent for the place where you live?

(1) Yes

(2) No

(99) Other answer

11. **IF (1) FOR ANY OF 5, 6, 7, 8, OR 10, ASK 12 THROUGH 19, ELSE SKIP TO CONCLUSION**

12. How many people live in your household, including yourself?

NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS _____

13. What is your household's total annual income from employment? Please combine the employment income of all members of your household, including yourself.

TOTAL ANNUAL EMPLOYMENT INCOME $_____

14. What is your household's total annual income from sources other than employment, such as social security, SSI, TANF or welfare, child support, retirement benefits, and so forth? Please combine the income from these sources of all members of your household, including yourself.

TOTAL ANNUAL OTHER INCOME $_____

15. What is the total value of your household's assets, such as savings, stocks, bonds, CDs, 401K, IRA, and so forth? Please combine the value of assets of all members of your household, including yourself.

TOTAL VALUE OF ASSETS $_____

Now I would like to ask your name, address, and telephone number. We need this information in case we need to contact you about a second interview. Some individuals who complete this interview will be invited to participate in a second interview to gather more other information about housing.

16. What is your full name, including your middle name?

_____

17. What is your present address? Include your building and apartment number.

_____

_____

18. What is your telephone number? _____

Finally, I would like to ask for the last four numbers of your social security number. This will only be used for internal analysis purposes – again I assure you that it will be kept entirely confidential and will not be released to any outside parties.

19. What are the last four numbers of your social security number? _____

CONCLUSION. That is all the questions that I have. Thank you very much for participating in this interview.

Interviewer Name: _____

Date: _____ Time of Completion: _____AM/PM

THE COGNITIVE QUESTIONNAIRE

OMB Control # 2528-0226
Expiration Date: 5/31/06

The Cognitive Questionnaire

Interviewer Name: _____

Interviewee Name: _____

Date: _____

Time: _____

Address of Interview: _____

_____

Telephone Number of Interviewee: _____

I am conducting an interview on the behalf of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. This information is being collected to improve programs for individuals who need help paying for their rent. Your answers will remain confidential. No results from this study will be released in a way that would enable others to know your individual answers. Your answers will not affect your receipt of government benefits.

I am going to ask you some questions about your current housing situation. This isn't a test. The questions don't necessarily have just one right answer. We just want to know what *you* think the answers are.

Some of the questions are difficult. They're not things that people usually think about. Don't be surprised if you find it hard to answer some of them.

When I ask you a question, you don't have to answer quickly. Please take the time that you need to think about the answer. After you've thought about it, tell me the best answer you can think of. Even if you're not completely sure the answer is right, just tell me the best answer that you can think of. Again, there's not necessarily one right answer, we're just interested in what you think.

Part I:
In the first part of the interview, I am going to ask you some "yes / no" or multiple-choice questions. Please give me the best answers that you can think of.

1. "Each year, is someone in your **household** required to do a **re-certification** to determine the amount of your rent?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(99) Refused

2. "Is your rent determined based on your household **income**?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(103) Refused

3. "Does **the government** help to pay for your rent?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(104) Refused

4. "Is the building owned by a **housing authority**?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(99) Refused

5. "Did a housing authority **assign** this address to your household?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(103) Refused

6. "Does your household have a **voucher** that allows you to choose where you live?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(99) Refused

7. "Is the building on **Section 8**?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(99) Refused

8. "Does the owner of the building receive a **low income housing tax credit**?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(102) Refused

AFTER ALL OF THE QUESTIONS IN PART I HAVE BEEN ANSWERED, *CIRCLE THE INTERVIEWEE'S ANSWERS* ON A FORM THAT SHOWS THE QUESTIONS IN PART I (THIS IS TO AID MEMORY OF THE ANSWERS GIVEN IN PART I). THEN *HAND THIS FORM TO THE INTERVIEWEE*.

Part II:

Now I am going to ask you some things about the answers that you gave. At this time, I'm going to give you a list of the questions that I just asked, so that you can look at them while I ask you the next questions. I have circled your answers on the sheet.

First let's talk about your answer to Question number 1. You answered Question 1 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

_____

_____

_____

- What do you think "household" means in Question 1?

_____

_____

_____

- What do you think "re-certification" means in Question 1?

_____

_____

_____

- Tell me how Question 1 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

_____

_____

_____

Let's talk about your answer to Question number 2. You answered Question 2 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

_____

_____

_____

- What do you think "income" means in Question 2?

_____

_____

_____

- Tell me how Question 2 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

_____

_____

_____

Let's talk about your answer to Question number 3. You answered Question 3 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

_____

_____

_____

- What do you think "the government" means in Question 3?

_____

_____

_____

- Tell me how Question 3 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

_____

_____

_____

Let's talk about your answer to Question number 4. You answered Question 4 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

_____

_____

_____

- What do you think "housing authority" means in Question 4?

_____

_____

_____

- Tell me how Question 4 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

_____

_____

_____

Let's talk about your answer to Question number 5. You answered Question 5 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

_____

_____

_____

- What do you think "assign" means in Question 5?

_____

_____

_____

- Tell me how Question 5 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

_____

_____

_____

Let's talk about your answer to Question number 6. You answered Question 6 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

_____

_____

_____

- What do you think "voucher" means in Question 6?

_____

_____

_____

- Tell me how Question 6 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

_____

_____

_____

Let's talk about your answer to Question number 7. You answered Question 7 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

_____

_____

_____

- What do you think "Section 8" means in Question 7?

_____

_____

_____

- Tell me how Question 7 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

_____

_____

_____

Let's talk about your answer to Question number 8. You answered Question 8 by saying **[insert interviewee's answer]**.

- How sure are you of your answer – really sure, kind of sure, or not so sure?

  CIRCLE ANSWER:
  Really sure
  Kind of sure
  Not so sure

- Why do you think that is the answer? Explain it to me in as much detail as possible.

_____

_____

_____

- What do you think "low income housing tax credit" means in Question 8?

_____

_____

_____

- Tell me how Question 8 could be improved, so that it is easier to understand and answer.

_____

_____

_____

Answer Sheet

1. "Each year, is someone in your household required to do a re-certification to determine the amount of your rent?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(99) Refused

2. "Is your rent determined based on your household income?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(104) Refused

3. "Does the government help to pay for your rent?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(105) Refused

4. "Is the building owned by a housing authority?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(99) Refused

5. "Did a housing authority assign this address to your household?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(104) Refused

6. "Does your household have a voucher that allows you to choose where you live?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(99) Refused

7. "Is the building on Section 8?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(99) Refused

8. "Does the owner of the building receive a low income housing tax credit?"

CIRCLE ANSWER:
(1) Yes
(2) No
(88) Don't know
(103) Refused

Appendix D:

INTERVIEWEES' RESPONSES TO THE SCREENER INTERVIEW (CURRENT AHS QUESTIONS) IN THE FALSE POSITIVE STUDY

INTERVIEWEES' RESPONSES TO THE COGNITIVE INTERVIEW OF THE FALSE POSITIVE STUDY

INTERVIEWEES' RESPONSES TO THE SCREENER INTERVIEW (CURRENT AHS QUESTIONS) IN THE FALSE POSITIVE STUDY

Table 1. Screener Responses For Each Individual Confirmed False Positive Respondent

(N=14)

RESPONDENT ID NUMBER	GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION OF RESPONDENT	SCREENER QUESTIONS					
		Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
		As a part of your rental agreement, does someone in your household need to answer questions about your household's income whenever your lease is up for renewal? (1) Yes (2) No	To whom does someone in your household report your household's income: 1) a building manager or landlord; 2) a public housing authority or state agency; 3) or someone else?	Does your household pay a lower rent because the government is paying part of the cost of the unit? (1) Yes (2) No	Is the building owned by a housing authority? (1) Yes (2) No	How did you come to live here? Did someone in your household apply on their own to the management here, or did an agency, such as a housing authority assign this address to your household? (1) Applied to management on own (2) Assigned to specific address	Did a housing authority, or some similar agency give you a certificate or voucher to help pay the rent for the place where you live? (1) Yes (2) No
01	FL	1	1	2	SKIP	SKIP	SKIP
02	FL	1	1	2	SKIP	SKIP	SKIP
03	FL	1	1	2	SKIP	SKIP	SKIP
04	FL	1	1	1	2	1	1
05	CA	1	2	SKIP	1	SKIP	SKIP
06	CA	2	SKIP	1	2	1	2
07	CA	1	2	SKIP	1	SKIP	SKIP
08	CA	1	1	2	SKIP	SKIP	SKIP
09	CA	1	2	SKIP	1	SKIP	SKIP
010	CA	2	SKIP	1	2	1	2
011	CA	1	1	2	SKIP	SKIP	SKIP
012	PA	1	1	1	2	1	1
013	PA	1	1	1	2	2	SKIP
014	PA	1	1	1	1	SKIP	SKIP

Table 2. Screener Responses For Each Subsidized (Public Housing) Individual Respondent

(N=9)

RESPONDENT ID NUMBER	GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION OF RESPONDENT	SCREENER QUESTIONS					
		Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
		As a part of your rental agreement, does someone in your household need to answer questions about your household's income whenever your lease is up for renewal? (1) Yes (2) No	To whom does someone in your household report your household's income: 1) a building manager or landlord; 2) a public housing authority or state agency; 3) or someone else?	Does your household pay a lower rent because the government is paying part of the cost of the unit? (1) Yes (2) No	Is the building owned by a housing authority? (1) Yes (2) No	How did you come to live here? Did someone in your household apply on their own to the management here, or did an agency, such as a housing authority assign this address to your household? (1) Applied to management on own (2) Assigned to specific address	Did a housing authority, or some similar agency give you a certificate or voucher to help pay the rent for the place where you live? (1) Yes (2) No
01	PA	2	SKIP	1	1	SKIP	SKIP
02	PA	1	1	1	1	SKIP	SKIP
03	PA	1	2	SKIP	1	SKIP	SKIP
04	PA	1	1	1	1	SKIP	SKIP
05	PA	1	2	SKIP	1	SKIP	SKIP
06	PA	1	1	2	SKIP	SKIP	SKIP
07	PA	2	SKIP	1	1	SKIP	SKIP
08	PA	1	1	1	1	SKIP	SKIP
09	FL	1	1	1	1	SKIP	SKIP

Table 3. Screener Responses For Each Individual Suspected Subsidy Recipient (SSR)

(N=9)

RESPONDENT ID NUMBER	GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION OF RESPONDENT	SCREENER QUESTIONS					
		Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
		As a part of your rental agreement, does someone in your household need to answer questions about your household's income whenever your lease is up for renewal? (1) Yes (2) No	To whom does someone in your household report your household's income: 1) a building manager or landlord; 2) a public housing authority or state agency; 3) or someone else?	Does your household pay a lower rent because the government is paying part of the cost of the unit? (1) Yes (2) No	Is the building owned by a housing authority? (1) Yes (2) No	How did you come to live here? Did someone in your household apply on their own to the management here, or did an agency, such as a housing authority assign this address to your household? (1) Applied to management on own (2) Assigned to specific address	Did a housing authority, or some similar agency give you a certificate or voucher to help pay the rent for the place where you live? (1) Yes (2) No
01SSR	FL	1	1	2	SKIP	SKIP	SKIP
02SSR	FL	1	1	1	1	SKIP	SKIP
03SSR	FL	1	1	2	SKIP	SKIP	SKIP
04SSR	FL	1	1	2	SKIP	SKIP	SKIP
05SSR	FL	1	1	2	SKIP	SKIP	SKIP
06SSR	FL	1	1	1	2	1	2
07SSR	FL	1	1	2	SKIP	SKIP	SKIP
08SSR	PA	1	1	1	2	1	2
09SSR	PA	1	1	1	2	1	2

INTERVIEWEES' RESPONSES TO THE COGNITIVE INTERVIEW OF THE FALSE POSITIVE STUDY

Table 1. Cognitive Responses For Each Individual Confirmed False Positive Respondent

(N=14)

RESPONDENT ID NUMBER	GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION OF RESPONDENT	COGNITIVE QUESTIONS							
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
		Each year, is someone in your household required to do a recertification to determine the amount of your rent? (1) Yes (2) No	Is your rent determined based on your household's income? (1) Yes (2) No	Does the government help to pay for your rent? (1) Yes (2) No	Is the building owned by a housing authority? (1) Yes (2) No	Did a housing authority assign this address to your household? (1) Yes (2) No	Does your household have a voucher that allows you to choose where you live? (1) Yes (2) No	Is the building on Section 8? (1) Yes (2) No	Does the owner of the building receive a low-income housing tax credit? (1) Yes (2) No
01	FL	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
02	FL	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
03	FL	2	1	2	2	2	DK	DK	DK
04	FL	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	DK
05	CA	1	1	1	DK	2	2	DK	1
06	CA	2	2	2	1	2	2	1	DK
07	CA	1	1	1	DK	2	2	DK	DK
08	CA	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	DK
09	CA	1	1	DK	DK	2	2	DK	DK
010	CA	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	DK
011	CA	2	2	2	DK	2	2	1	DK
012	PA	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	1
013	PA	1	1	1	1	1	2	DK	DK
014	PA	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	DK

Table 2. Cognitive Responses For Each Individual Subsidized (Public Housing) False Positive Respondent (N=9)

RESPONDENT ID NUMBER	GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION OF RESPONDENT	COGNITIVE QUESTIONS							
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
		Each year, is someone in your household required to do a recertification to determine the amount of your rent? (1) Yes (2) No	Is your rent determined based on your household's income? (1) Yes (2) No	Does the government help to pay for your rent? (1) Yes (2) No	Is the building owned by a housing authority? (1) Yes (2) No	Did a housing authority assign this address to your household? (1) Yes (2) No	Does your household have a voucher that allows you to choose where you live? (1) Yes (2) No	Is the building on Section 8? (1) Yes (2) No	Does the owner of the building receive a low-income housing tax credit? (1) Yes (2) No
01	PA	2	1	1	1	1	2	2	DK
02	PA	1	1	DK	1	1	2	DK	1
03	PA	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	DK
04	PA	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	DK
05	PA	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1
06	PA	1	1	2	1	1	2	DK	DK
07	PA	2	1	1	1	1	2	2	DK
08	PA	1	1	2	1	1	DK	2	DK
09	FL	1	1	1	DK	2	2	1	DK

Table 3. Cognitive Responses For Each Individual Suspected Subsidy Recipient (SSR)

(N=9)

RESPONDENT ID NUMBER	GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION OF RESPONDENT	COGNITIVE QUESTIONS							
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
		Each year, is someone in your household required to do a recertification to determine the amount of your rent? (1) Yes (2) No	Is your rent determined based on your household's income? (1) Yes (2) No	Does the government help to pay for your rent? (1) Yes (2) No	Is the building owned by a housing authority? (1) Yes (2) No	Did a housing authority assign this address to your household? (1) Yes (2) No	Does your household have a voucher that allows you to choose where you live? (1) Yes (2) No	Is the building on Section 8? (1) Yes (2) No	Does the owner of the building receive a low-income housing tax credit? (1) Yes (2) No
01SSR	FL	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
02SSR	FL	1	1	1	DK	DK	2	1	DK
03SSR	FL	1	1	2	DK	2	2	DK	1
04SSR	FL	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	1
05SSR	FL	DK	DK	2	2	2	2	DK	DK
06SSR	FL	1	DK	1	DK	2	1	2	DK
07SSR	FL	1	1	2	2	2	2	DK	1
08SSR	PA	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	DK
09SSR	PA	1	1	1	2	2	2	DK	1

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Office of Policy Development and Research
Washington, DC 20410-6000

Official Business
Penalty for Private Use $300
Return Service Requested

FIRST-CLASS MAIL
POSTAGE & FEES PAID
HUD
PERMIT NO. G-795

Reproduced by collection technique or identifying the housing or housing space of survey respondents

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

September 2005