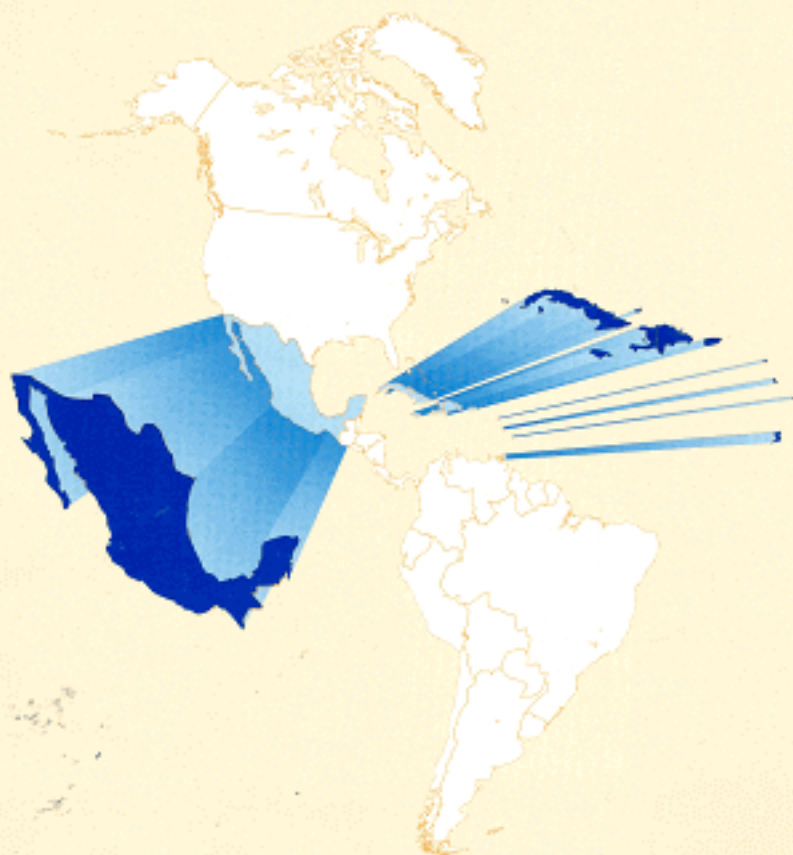


GUIDE TO CONDUCTING CUSTOMER SURVEYS



**American Commission on Organization
and Administrative Systems**

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Social Security Committee**

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Guide to Conducting Customer Surveys

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Guide to Conducting Customer Surveys

I. General Introduction

This reference manual was developed in response to a need identified by the American Commission on Organization and Administrative Systems (CAOSA). It was thought that the social insurance agencies of member countries could benefit from studies measuring customers' wants and needs, and the extent to which customers' expectations are being met.

This reference manual presents a practical guide to conducting customer satisfaction surveys, providing suggestions on how to identify an agency's customers, designing a questionnaire to accurately measure customers' beliefs and analyzing survey results. In order to develop this manual, the authors utilized a number of resources, including survey literature provided by the United States' Social Security Administration (SSA) and Canada's Health and Welfare Canada, Income Security Programs.

The purpose of this reference manual is to provide CAOSA's member countries and the member countries of the North American and English-Speaking Caribbean Subregion with a resource that their social insurance agencies can use to support the understanding, development, implementation and maintenance of customer satisfaction surveys. Having an understanding of what the customer expects from a social insurance agency permits the agency to take actions that will make a difference to the customer by providing:

- Information for strategic planning; and
- Direction concerning areas of improvement.

II. How to Conduct Satisfaction Surveys of Social Insurance Agency Clients

A. What are Customer Satisfaction Surveys?

Customer satisfaction surveys are a tool for learning about agency services from a customer's perspective. Therefore, they differ substantially from methods traditionally used in the evaluation of governmental programs.

Customers, from the point of view of social insurance agencies, can be roughly defined as:

- Those who use an agency's service (for example, beneficiaries);

- Those who are affected by agency programs (such as interest or advocacy groups); and
- Those who pay for agency programs and services (taxpayers, contributors and/or the Government).

To determine what customer satisfaction means in their particular situation, agencies will need to identify their own customers.

Traditional program evaluation addresses the objective outcomes of a program, while customer satisfaction surveys focus on customer perceptions, preferences and related opinions about an agency's performance. Performance may be measured in a number of areas: e.g., service delivery (i.e., in-office waiting times, accuracy of benefit calculation or prompt delivery of benefit payments); information outreach (brochures and newspaper articles explaining benefits); notices explaining decisions that have been made on claims for benefits; and recordkeeping accuracy for the payments needed to establish entitlement (i.e., contributions or taxes).

Customer surveys provide insight into customer perceptions and can also help identify agency operations that need quality improvement. They also provide early detection of problems and focus attention on areas where remedial training or changes in existing operations might improve delivery of products or services.

The one thing that all customer satisfaction surveys have in common is that they solicit opinions. Both quantitative and qualitative studies of opinions play important roles.

Quantitative Studies - The objective of a quantitative study is to produce statistical descriptions (careful, repeatable measurements) of customer satisfaction related to a fixed set of agency perceptions or activities. For example, a study could consist of a set of questions concerning satisfaction with such specific indicators of service delivery as timeliness, courtesy, accuracy and other particular aspects of an agency's operations administered to a random sample drawn from beneficiaries receiving a particular type of benefit. The study objective would be to make comparative measurements over time.

Qualitative Studies - Qualitative studies play many roles, from the basic task of understanding customer perceptions and expectations, to the task of developing survey instruments (e.g., questionnaires) for a quantitative study. These studies include activities such as: gathering opinions of individual customers regarding service aspects or conducting small-scale tests of questionnaires.

For example, a focus group of customers could be assembled to discuss a specific set of questions. (Refer to Appendix D for a discussion of SSA's use of this

method.) They would be asked to respond in their own words about their expectations, to relate their own experiences with agency services or to discuss improvements they would like to see. An alternative to this is the cognitive laboratory experiment which asks volunteer subjects to tell what they are thinking as they read a survey question -- what they understand the words to mean and what they think the question is asking.

The most important distinction is that qualitative methods are intended to produce understanding and insight, while quantitative methods are intended to produce statistical measurements describing large populations.

B. How are Customer Satisfaction Surveys Used?

Customer satisfaction surveys provide information on the overall gap between what customers expect and their perceptions of actual service performance. These overall gaps point to areas an agency needs to examine to determine the causes of any shortfall in perceived performance. These areas include, but are not limited to:

- The difference between actual customer expectations and the agency's perceptions of what they were.
- Errors in translating perceptions of customer expectations into standards of quality service.
- The shortfall of service delivery relative to these standards.
- External communications to customers (e.g., advertising) that inflate or otherwise alter expectations.

Such efforts to use survey results to reexamine agency processes can generate much discussion and technical debate (involving identifying the components of satisfaction, the consequences of a separate measure of expectations, etc.). They can also motivate agencies to establish courses of action to improve customer satisfaction. Some ways to improve satisfaction include:

- Obtaining and ensuring the support of top management.
- Defining customer satisfaction in the customer's terms.
- Establishing focused and measurable objectives (i.e., setting service standards).
- Defining measurements that are "actionable."

- Building awareness of customer needs at all levels of an organization.
- Tailoring measurements to actual operations.
- Conducting continuous satisfaction measurement.

Keep in mind that the first part of this process is gauging through a customer satisfaction survey what the customer wants.

Given the new ground agencies may have to break in mounting customer surveys, it is expected that, whatever measurement process is put in place initially, your agency will need to make major changes to sharpen the focus of those surveys and otherwise improve on beginning efforts. It is useful to think of the survey process as one involving continuous change and evolution, because the more you learn about the process and your customers, the more you discover ways to improve your surveys.

C. Activities in Conducting a Customer Satisfaction Survey

1. Introduction

This section provides guidance for implementing a customer satisfaction survey. The section focuses on the methodology of designing, conducting and analyzing a survey.

The survey-taking tasks have been divided into 12 stages, beginning with early planning activities and ending with the presentation and analysis of results.

Much of this discussion applies to surveys generally. However, there are features that are unique to customer surveys. Questions about customer attitudes and opinions require more careful consideration of underlying issues that should be measured. In addition, to be useful to managers, customer survey results must be related to actions that the agency might take to alter customer perceptions.

2. Top Management Role

Top management needs to provide leadership in the activities set out here, especially in: (1) setting the scope of the customer measurement program; and (2) identifying the factors and characteristics that contribute to customer satisfaction. These first two steps are by far the most important and the most in need of top management's attention.

Direct top management action may also be advisable in the following decision areas:

- Who will actually conduct the survey (e.g., a contractor or an in-house survey team).
- The cost implications of overall sample size and response rate goals.

Obviously top management will be on the receiving end of the survey results, as will other levels in your agency. For report preparation to work well, top management needs to spell out beforehand how it wants to see the results and then to refine its requests based on what is discovered.

There are many other aspects to consider in the survey-taking process. While some will need monitoring by top management, for the most part, they can be carried out by technical staff.

One of the key actions after a survey is completed is to document lessons learned and recommendations for future studies. No one survey of customers will suffice; an ongoing measurement program is needed so changes in customer perceptions can be tracked over time. However, improvements in the way measurements are made should be emphasized early in an ongoing effort, even if partially at the sacrifice of consistent trend data.

3. Steps in Conducting a Customer Satisfaction Survey

The processes involved in carrying out a survey can be divided into 12 steps. For each step, this section provides:

- Definitions of the activities;
- Suggestions on who should carry out each step;
- Considerations to think about and some cautions;
- Summarizations of the skills needed for each step and the outcomes anticipated; and
- Examples of the processes involved.

You should keep in mind that this discussion takes into consideration the optimal methods of survey measurement. The intent here is not to imply that you cannot conduct customer satisfaction surveys without each of these

12 steps in place exactly as described here. As stated earlier, an important part of the process of conducting surveys involves change -- anticipating it, planning for it and making sure that it is incorporated into the entire process.

Step 1: Determining Scope

An extensive planning effort is needed to mount a customer satisfaction survey. The first planning task is to answer the questions:

- What are your agency's products/services?
- Who are the customers of your agency?

These are basic issues, but prior experience teaches that coming to an agency consensus on the answers may be difficult. Top and middle management should participate, along with front-line staff, in answering these questions. Input from all levels of the organization is necessary, since products/services and customers look different depending on one's position in the organization. Of primary concern are the public you serve directly, but you may also identify other agencies, private organizations or your own agency staff as customers. It may be useful to distinguish between internal (within agency) and external customers.

Another major aspect in determining overall scope is deciding:

- What should the specific survey goals be?

Part of the answer is to look at how the survey information will eventually be used to develop service standards. Usually it will be necessary to make hard choices about which key issues to measure. You should be prepared to rethink these choices once initial survey results become available.

Step 2: Defining Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is a many-faceted concept; it is clearly not just the answer to the single question, "How satisfied are you?"

- How then should customer satisfaction be measured?

The agency needs to know: how customers and front-line employees define the agency's services; what attributes determine satisfaction/dissatisfaction; and what criteria customers use to evaluate the various products and services. It is important to talk to as diverse a group of customers as possible, so that no major perspective or point of view is omitted.

The ingredients of satisfaction for agency customers must be identified. Overall satisfaction is affected by customers' expectations of performance and the agency's actual performance.

The agency must identify activities that might affect the satisfaction of its customers and what aspects of the service are important. This may require separate measurements of satisfaction for the following:

- The agency's products/services (e.g., number of programs or types of benefits administered); and
- The service concerning those products (e.g., helpfulness of staff).

Important activities must be measured along with satisfaction so that the relationship between agency actions and customer satisfaction can be observed. For example, a major determinant of satisfaction may be the timeliness with which the agency processes claims for benefits (regardless of outcome). Ideally, the agency should be able to show, quantitatively through the survey results, the degree to which changes in agency actions affect customer satisfaction.

Step 3: Identifying Target Customers

The customer types and the products/services have already been identified in Step 1, and the criteria for measuring customer satisfaction have been agreed upon in Step 2. Now, the work that was done in Step 1 needs to be translated into the context in which the survey is conducted.

- Who are the specific groups of customers you want to survey?

Key segments of the customer base and other characteristics of the customers should be identified for measurement in the survey. For example, you could determine whether to survey all beneficiaries or only those receiving certain types of benefits and whether you also need to survey contributors to the social insurance program.

Step 4: Developing the Sampling Frame

After determining your target customer population, you are now ready to identify a means of selecting a sample of them. To do so, you should develop a "sampling frame."

- What is a sampling frame?

A sample frame is a list of customers with addresses, telephone numbers or some other information indicating how customers can be contacted. This information can be distilled from various sources; for instance, by reviewing administrative records or collecting names and addresses. Bear in mind that frames vary in quality as indicated by such factors as completeness, recency and inclusion of information for contacting the customers.

Certain subclasses of customers that may be of special interest in a satisfaction survey may be difficult to enumerate. For example, it can be challenging to contact discouraged or infrequent customers. The ability to make general statements about your agency's customers based on the survey results is linked to how complete and accurate your frame is.

A frame can include information on the transaction per se or on the customer per se. This (whether the frame includes transaction data or customer data) will have statistical implications that must be taken into consideration. For instance, if you are using a frame that contains contact, episode and/or transaction data, single customers can appear in the frame many times leading to problems of multiple records.

In some cases, the information required to construct a frame may be inaccessible or difficult to obtain because it is considered confidential. In other cases, once the frame is constructed, the mix of information can be such that the frame itself becomes confidential. Therefore, it is important to separate administrative uses of the frame from survey uses of the frame.

Step 5: Choosing the Data Collection Method

Surveys may be conducted in many different ways: mail, self-administered questionnaires, telephone surveys and face-to-face surveys.

- Which data collection method is best suited for your customer survey?

The type of frame developed for the survey may determine or limit the choice of data collection methods. For instance, some frames have only customer addresses making mailed questionnaires the most feasible choice. Other frames come from individual telephone or face-to-face contact of customers with the agency. In any case, the nature of the service may affect the type of data collection methodology that can be used.

Each type of data collection method comes with its associated costs. Self-administered mail surveys are the least costly, with telephone surveys running

second and face-to-face interview surveys being the most expensive, both in terms of staffing allocations and monitoring/training costs.

Data collection methods also vary in the amount of time they take to conduct. Telephone surveys are the fastest and face-to-face surveys run second. Mail questionnaires are the slowest (because of the time required to return questionnaires and complete followup activities using the mail). However, mail questionnaires do not require agency staff to conduct interviewing.

In addition to cost and time, data collection methods vary along other aspects that can ultimately affect the quality of survey results. These include: response rates, the completeness and accuracy of the answers provided and whether or not respondents believe in the survey's pledges of confidentiality.

Overall, survey quality is a complex mix of these and other features connected to the data collection method. The decision to choose one mode or a combination may also take into consideration the demographic characteristics of customers; for example, level of telephone ownership (telephone survey), literacy rates (mail) and accessibility via common modes of transportation (face-to-face).

Step 6: Choosing the Survey Team

Next you need to decide what group should be charged with collecting the customer survey data. In particular:

- Having decided on the basic data collection method, how do you implement it?

Data collection can be undertaken by agency staff who have direct contact with customers, by agency staff removed from customer contact, by another Government agency or by an independent contractor. Whatever choice your agency makes, the manner of contacting the customer and asking questions should encourage customers to answer objectively by giving the sampled customers freedom to express satisfaction or dissatisfaction. In some contexts, this objectivity may be difficult to obtain if agency staff who provide service are also used to collect the survey data.

When interviewers are used, they should be trained in those aspects of agency service that they need to know in order to record customer feedback accurately. This training may even be given to in-house staff interviewers to assure uniform interviewing behavior.

Regardless of who does the interviewing, they should be trained in survey interviewing techniques. Agencies may contract with private survey companies to train all employees who will be interviewing or else pay for the training of only a few employees who will then train the others ("training the trainer").

Step 7: Developing and Pretesting the Questionnaire

One of the most critical components for obtaining useful feedback on customer satisfaction from surveys is the questionnaire or survey instrument.

- How do you ask questions in the survey that best illuminate levels of customer satisfaction?

Careful development and pretesting of questions is the key to being reasonably sure that survey answers reflect customers' true opinions. For instance, when answering satisfaction questions, respondents have a tendency to answer in a positive way. The questionnaire should, therefore, deal with both attitudes and experiences and include multiple questions for key dimensions of service quality (e.g., courtesy, competence, reliability and communication) each with a slightly different focus. Asking about an important service attribute in several ways provides more complete and reliable measurement.

The following are some points to consider in designing survey instruments:

Using Multiple Questions to Measure Satisfaction is Important

Because satisfaction held by a customer cannot be observed objectively, but is an internalized state containing several components, customer surveys ask the customer many different questions, all of which are viewed as slightly different indicators of the same overall concept of satisfaction. This "multiple indicator" approach has been found to improve the reliability of satisfaction levels measured by surveys. Indeed, most models of measurement suggest that the more questions used to measure satisfaction, the more stable or reliable the results will be. Two problems arise from a multiple indicator approach: how many different questions should be used to measure satisfaction (with each added question, the length of the questionnaire increases) and how do you combine statistically the various questions into a useful measure of satisfaction? Statisticians, especially those experienced in attitudinal surveys, scale construction and multivariate modeling with multiple indicators can be helpful in guiding decisions on these points.

Respondents Tend to Answer Positively to Customer Satisfaction Questions

Customer surveys often find that customers tend to overstate their levels of satisfaction. This produces skewed distributions for satisfaction measures with the vast majority of respondents giving positive ratings. Analysis on skewed variables cannot use traditional normal distribution theories for statistical inference to the full customer population. You need to use techniques that are sensitive to these distribution issues.

The tendency to over-report satisfaction also produces a problem for the measurement of change in satisfaction levels over time. Because of the tendency to overestimate positive sentiments, it becomes increasingly difficult for levels of customer satisfaction to show large increases over time. A law of diminishing returns affects estimates of change. Some researchers have found that this issue is ameliorated somewhat by use of many different questions on satisfaction that vary in their tendency to achieve very high ratings (the multiple indicator approach mentioned above).

A related phenomenon to the tendency to answer positively is the problem of a "halo" effect, whereby customers answer each individual question by giving their overall impression of the agency rather than assessing the particular attribute of the product or service measured by a question. This produces inflated correlations among different satisfaction items that decreases the value of any one measure.

There are Many Choices for Response Scales in Satisfaction Questions

Some customer surveys ask the respondents to report their satisfaction on a 5-point scale with each point labelled (e.g., "Not at All Satisfied" to "Very Satisfied"). Others ask the respondent to use a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 meaning "Completely Dissatisfied" and 10 "Completely Satisfied." Others use 7-point scales or 100-point scales. The two decisions on the number of scale points to use and how to label the points affect the answers the respondents give and the subsequent overall measures of satisfaction.

There is extensive literature on how to construct attitude scales that can help you avoid unintended biasing of responses. No matter what response scale is chosen, however, you cannot safely use the answers from a single question, as if it were a simple count of some uniform "satisfaction unit." The mean rating on a single 7-point scale, for example, is likely to have very low reliability.

High Response Rates for Customer Surveys Improve the Credibility and Usefulness of Results

When customers sampled in a satisfaction survey do not participate in the survey, the survey results are threatened. This is particularly troublesome when nonresponse is higher among certain types of customers (e.g., if those who are mildly positive to the agency choose not to respond, but those who are very dissatisfied or very satisfied do respond, or vice versa). The results of the survey may give a very distorted picture of agency performance among its current customers. No survey achieves a 100-percent participation rate, but efforts to assure that customers in different important groups (e.g., by frequency of contact with the agency, by demographic characteristics or by type of product/service used) participate at the same rate are important. In doing this, use nonthreatening followup and "respondent-friendly" solicitation of participation (both for ongoing relationships with valued customers and to avoid distortion of answers to the satisfaction questions).

Pretesting

A number of methods are used to pretest a questionnaire: practice one-on-one interviews; special interviews where respondents are asked about their comprehension of terms in proposed questions; focus group discussions of questions, involving a moderator-guided panel of customers or using a cognitive laboratory.

After a questionnaire is developed, it should be pretested under real conditions. This kind of field testing is to a survey what a dress rehearsal is to a play. The questionnaire is tested using a small-scale version of the entire survey with all design features in place.

Further Development

Because respondents may be affected by the wording and ordering of questions, tracking satisfaction over time requires that the questionnaire remain as constant as possible for key indicators. However, most organizations find that initial satisfaction measurement techniques can be improved. Thus, there is a tension between the desire to measure change and the desire to improve the quality of the survey.

The real leap in information about your agency's relationships with its customers comes by seeing how customer satisfaction changes over time in response to management decisions. Measurement of change in levels over time involves sample designs that are compatible at both times, a questionnaire that has measures that are comparable, levels of participation in the survey that

are similar and statistical analyses that directly measure change in the same statistics.

Sample Questions

Appendix A contains sample generic questions that may be useful when you design your survey. Appendices B and C contain the survey instruments used by the United States and Canada, respectively.

When reading Appendices B and C, be careful to note the instructions or skip patterns for various questions, where depending on the answer to one question, the respondent should continue onto a question not in strict order of appearance on the questionnaire. Ideally, any questions you use, whether adopted from this manual or locally designed, should be pretested and revised as necessary.

Step 8: Constructing the Statistical Design of the Sample

There are many options for the design of a sample for a customer survey:

- How do you design the sample for the customer survey?

Most experts think that results of customer surveys cannot be interpreted with confidence unless probability sampling is used. In general, the larger the sample size, the more precise are the survey results, but other aspects of the sample design also affect survey quality. For instance, stratification of customers into subgroups or classes is a commonly used technique to ensure that the customers in the frame represent the agency's actual pool of customers.

Oversampling of a geographic area or population subgroup may be desirable to permit the presentation of regional statistics or characteristics by different age or ethnic groups. If your agency has area or regional offices, separate samples of the areas served by different offices may be useful. Each of these sample design features affects the statistical properties of the survey results.

The ideal respondent is usually the person who most directly receives the service. In some cases the respondent may be the person who contacted the agency on behalf of someone else; e.g., a wife calling about her husband's claim for benefits. If an organization (for example, an employer) is the customer, the choice of respondent becomes more complex and there may be multiple customers of interest in each organization. You should try to identify the person or persons in each organization with the knowledge necessary to

respond to your request. In some cases, you may need to interview several different staff members in each customer organization.

Step 9: Achieving High Response Rates

Regardless of how well the survey is designed, there will be some customers selected for the survey who will not respond.

- What can you do to achieve adequate response rates?

Low response rates can lead to misleading survey results, since the people who did not respond may be unlike the survey participants.

The following methods usually prove useful in ensuring high rates of response. Each of them also may have implications for the cost-efficiency of the survey:

- Advance Notification - The respondent is contacted ahead of time and informed about the survey, including its goals and its provision of confidentiality, and is encouraged to participate.
- Ease of Answering Questions - Customers will more likely answer questions that are easy to comprehend and to answer.
- "Friendly" Questionnaires - For mail questionnaires, use a personalized graphical design that is simple, attractive and easy to read. A booklet style may make it look smaller and easier to complete.
- Repeated Followup - Those not immediately responding are sent postcard reminders and additional questionnaires in mail surveys. Repeated calls are used for noncontacts in telephone and face-to-face surveys.

Timeframes for followup contacts depend on the characteristics of your customer population, but a rough guide to use in the beginning might be:

- Week 1 - Mail letter and questionnaire
- Week 3 - Send a postcard reminder
- Week 5 - Followup letter and replacement questionnaire
- Week 7 - Telephone call/reminder postcard
- Week 10 - Certified letter and replacement questionnaire

Step 10: Ensuring Quality During Data Collection

Now you are ready to conduct the survey. However, one of the biggest management tasks remains:

- What can you do to ensure quality, while the data are being collected?

There are a number of indicators of survey quality that should be sought throughout the entire survey process. The specific indicators that are available will depend on how the survey is conducted. Special attention should be paid to:

- The percentage of sampled customers contacted;
- Interviewer response rate performance;
- Extent of questions read as worded;
- Extent of use of nondirective probing -- that is, supplemental questions an interviewer may ask to jog the respondent's memory, while being careful not to guide the respondent's answer;
- Questionnaire completion rates as the survey progresses;
- Response rates of individual survey items; and
- Daily records on problems arising in the data collection and inquiries regarding the survey.

If interviewers are used, they should be closely supervised, including checks of a sample of their work. The questionnaire should be administered with no variation from instructions. Any variation could give rise to biased answers from sample customers.

Step 11: Processing the Survey Data

Once the survey is conducted, the survey answers need to be placed in a form useful for analysis.

- How do you convert the data to a useful form?

This decision depends on the amount and complexity of the data your survey produces. At a basic level, you should make a tally of the number of different

types of responses given for each question, grouping into categories answers given in the respondents' own words. The questionnaires will seldom be "perfect," in that rarely will all questions be answered in their entirety. Some responses will be missing and survey results can be affected if those missing answers are for distinctive types of customers. (Note, that in attitudinal surveys, the answer: "I don't know" can be informative and should be maintained as a response in its own right.)

The next step is to identify the most prevalent responses and determine what percentage of the total each one represents. Further analysis could identify how groups of customers with similar characteristics answered specific questions. This can be done as a paper-and-pencil process for small-scale surveys.

For larger or more complex surveys, computerization of this process is optimal. Transforming survey answers into computer-readable form usually entails coding (assigning numerical values to answer categories) and data processing (e.g., keying entry of numeric data into computer files). The data set is formatted to be compatible with a statistical software package. It is important to include in the data set information on the probabilities of selection and other design features corresponding to each interview record.

Step 12: Summarizing and Delivering Survey Results

Once a survey data set is ready, the data must be analyzed to learn what they can tell you about customer satisfaction:

- What analytic techniques should be undertaken?
- How can survey information be effectively communicated to management?

Customer satisfaction statistics can be simple percentages of respondents who chose a particular response category. For larger or more complex surveys, complex statistical models may be used to summarize the answers to many questions simultaneously.

In all cases, the presentation of survey statistics should be accompanied by available measures of their quality, such as standard errors, confidence intervals, levels of missing data, response rates and statistical comparisons of multiple indicators of the same concept. Graphical presentations of results (i.e., tables, charts and pictographs) often communicate more clearly than numbers and text.

Survey results should be disseminated to all levels of staff that were involved at the initial stages described in Step 1. The form of presentation should be tailored to the particular staff level. Reports should be designed to address the concerns of each level of staff. All presentations should strive for clarity and brevity. Remember that certain key facts, such as question wordings and the population on which the statistics are based, should be included in all reports. Information that is operationally useful (actionable) should be part of the presentations. Most importantly, the survey reports should be timely, for the value of the data diminishes as time passes.

In summary, there are 12 steps in conducting a customer satisfaction survey:

- Step 1 Determining Scope;
- Step 2 Defining Customer Satisfaction;
- Step 3 Identifying Target Customers;
- Step 4 Developing the Sampling Frame;
- Step 5 Choosing the Data Collection Method;
- Step 6 Choosing the Survey Team;
- Step 7 Developing and Pretesting the Questionnaire;
- Step 8 Constructing the Statistical Design of the Sample;
- Step 9 Achieving High Response Rates;
- Step 10 Ensuring Quality During Data Collection;
- Step 11 Processing the Survey Data; and
- Step 12 Summarizing and Delivering Survey Results

III. Conclusion

Methods to craft satisfaction measurements, conduct the surveys and analyze the results are undergoing rapid developments as the private, governmental and academic sectors learn how to improve techniques. Continuous improvement in customer surveys will require the staffs in social insurance agencies to keep up with these developments.

Beyond this brief manual, it is expected that the social insurance agencies of the member countries of CAOSA and the North American and English-Speaking Caribbean Subregion will maintain a dialogue to discuss issues and problems, and seek and obtain expert assistance in developing questionnaires, designing and conducting training programs for survey interviewers and conducting statistical analyses of survey data.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

APPENDIX A

Sample Generic Questions on Customer Satisfaction

In this section, we attempt to delineate some basic questions which should be included in surveys aimed to gauge customer satisfaction with social insurance policies and procedures. We present these basic or "generic" questions based on the experience of the United States' Social Security Administration (SSA) and those of Canada's Income Security Programs (ISP). While in some cases you may find that these examples are applicable to your own situation, we caution you to determine the question format and content that would best elicit accurate responses from your own customers.

Some Notes on Survey Mode

The Canadian survey is a self-administered or mail survey which is sent to respondents to complete on their own.

The SSA survey, which is presented here, is a face-to-face or personal survey. This survey requires an interviewer to visit the respondent, ask the questions shown on the questionnaire and complete the survey based on what the respondent says. SSA also uses telephone-administered surveys and has used mail surveys on a limited basis.

Each of these modes has its advantages and disadvantages in terms of: ease of administration; staffing requirements; training and supervision; cost; and reliability of results. In addition, there are differences in the way questions are worded and presented, depending on the mode. We urge you to research the considerable literature which is available concerning survey mode and choose the type which is best suited to your organization and the customers it serves.

Following are the topic areas used to classify the generic questions:

- Questions about service for office visits;
- Questions about mail service;
- Questions about telephone service;
- Questions about overall quality of service; and
- Other questions.

Note that the questions are not necessarily presented in order. As you read each question, you should consider it separate from the preceding and subsequent questions.

(Appendices B and C contain copies of the SSA and ISP surveys.)

Questions about Service for Office Visits

1. Did you have an appointment for your last visit to the (Agency) office?

_____ Yes
_____ No

2. How long did you have to wait for an appointment?

3. How satisfied were you with how soon you got an appointment?

_____ Satisfied
_____ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
_____ Dissatisfied

4. Was the day and time of your appointment convenient for you?

_____ Yes
_____ No

5. Why did you last visit the (Agency) office? (Select the reason or reasons for your last visit.)

_____ Applied for benefits
Type: _____
_____ Asked about mail I had received from (Agency)
_____ Told (Agency) about new name, new address or some other change
_____ (Agency) had asked me to return some of the benefits I had received
_____ (Agency) asked me for certain evidence or other information
_____ I disagreed with a decision (Agency) had made
_____ I visited the office for some other reason
Explain: _____

6. Were you served promptly?

7. How long did you have to wait to see the person who helped you with your business?

8. How long was your wait compared to what you expected?

9. How long do you think it is reasonable to expect to wait before being served when visiting one of our offices?

10. In general, how courteous or discourteous were (Agency) employees during your last visit?

- ☐ Very courteous
- ☐ Courteous
- ☐ Neither courteous nor discourteous
- ☐ Discourteous
- ☐ Very discourteous

11. How clearly did they explain what would happen as a result of your visit?

- ☐ Clearly
- ☐ Somewhat clearly
- ☐ Not clearly

12. How clearly did they explain what you should do or what changes you should report to (Agency)?

- ☐ Clearly
- ☐ Somewhat clearly
- ☐ Not clearly

13. How satisfied are you with the time it took (Agency) to handle this matter?

- ☐ Very satisfied
- ☐ Generally satisfied
- ☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- ☐ Generally dissatisfied
- ☐ Very dissatisfied

14. What kind of job has (Agency) done in handling this matter?

- ☐ Very good job
- ☐ Good job
- ☐ Fair job
- ☐ Poor job
- ☐ Very poor job

15. What time of day would you prefer to visit our offices?

16. Do you know where our office closest to your home is located?

If you know where our closest office is located:

- a) How long would it take you to get there from your home?
- b) How would you most likely get to our office?
- c) From your home, is our office easy to get to by public transit?

Questions about Mail Service

1. About how many times have you written to (Agency) in the past 12 months?
2. The last time you wrote to (Agency), what was the main reason?

_____ I had a question or needed information
_____ (Agency) asked me to mail them something
_____ I reported a change (e.g., address, name)
_____ I thanked them for their help
_____ I had a complaint
_____ Other
 Explain: _____
3. How did you find the address for our office?
4. Did the reply answer your questions?
5. How soon did (Agency) respond?
6. How satisfied were you with how soon the (Agency) responded?

_____ Satisfied
_____ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
_____ Dissatisfied
7. Have you received any mail, other than a benefit check, from (Agency)?

_____ Yes
_____ No
8. What kind of mail did you receive from (Agency)?
9. In general, how easy or hard to understand was the mail you received from (Agency)?

_____ Very easy to understand
_____ Easy to understand
_____ Neither easy nor hard to understand
_____ Hard to understand
_____ Very hard to understand
10. Which kind of mail was hard or very hard to understand?

11. Have you asked anyone else to help you understand mail you received from (Agency)?

_____ No

_____ I asked (Agency) for help

_____ I asked someone else for help

12. How long do you think it is reasonable to wait for a reply to a letter written to one of our offices? _____

Questions about Telephone Service

1. How did you find the telephone number for our offices?
2. About how many times have you reached (Agency) by telephone in the past 12 months?
3. If you tried to call but didn't get through, what number were you calling?
4. Why were you unable to get through?
5. When calling one of our offices, did you ever find the telephone lines busy?
6. What did you do if the telephone lines were busy?
7. What did you do as a result of not getting through?

☐ I visited the (Agency) office
☐ I wrote the (Agency)
☐ I asked someone else for help
☐ Nothing, I still need to contact (Agency)

8. The last time you reached (Agency) by telephone, did you get through on the first try?
9. Thinking about the reason for your last call, how satisfied are you with the time it took (Agency) to handle this matter?

☐ Very satisfied
☐ Generally satisfied
☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
☐ Generally dissatisfied
☐ Very dissatisfied

10. What kind of job has (Agency) done in handling this matter?

☐ Very good job
☐ Good job
☐ Fair job
☐ Poor job
☐ Very poor job

11. We normally handle telephone inquiries from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday to Friday. Would you like these hours extended to ...?

Questions about Overall Quality of Service

1. What kind of job do you think (Agency) has done in informing you about which Social Security programs are available to you?

_____ Very good job
_____ Good job
_____ Fair job
_____ Poor job
_____ Very poor job

2. Overall, how clearly has (Agency) explained the program you applied for and the changes you should report?

_____ Clearly
_____ Somewhat clearly
_____ Not clearly

3. Which, if any, benefits are you currently receiving from (Agency)?

4. Overall, how would you rate the service that (Agency) has given you?

_____ Very good
_____ Good
_____ Fair
_____ Poor
_____ Very poor

Other Questions

1. How did you obtain your application forms?
2. Was the wording on the application form easy to understand?
3. Did you require any help completing the application forms?

If you required help to complete the application form(s):

- a) What did you do to get this help?
 - b) Did you get the help you required?
4. If you had to contact one of our offices, which of the following methods would you most prefer to use:
- _____ Telephone one of our offices
- _____ Visit one of our offices
- _____ Write a letter to one of our offices
- _____ Other, (specify) _____

5. Have you ever received a record of earnings statement?

If you have received a record of earnings statement.

- a) Was this statement correct?
 - b) What did you do if your statement was not correct?
 - c) Were you satisfied with the result of your contact with our office regarding changes to your record of earnings statement?
6. How often do you read the information inserted with your check?
7. Has there ever been a month when you have not received a check from the (Agency) that you were expecting?

If there has been a month when you did not receive one of your checks:

- a) What did you do about this?
 - b) How long did it take to receive a replacement for the check that you did not receive?
8. How long do you think it is reasonable to wait for the replacement of a check that you did not receive?

9. Have any of the check inserts prompted you to take action?

If any of the check inserts have prompted you to take action, what type of action did you take? _____

APPENDIX B

United States (U.S) Social Security Administration (SSA) Service Delivery Evaluation

Background

The U.S. SSA administers two major benefit programs: the title II program, which includes retirement and survivors insurance and disability income benefits for workers and their families based on worker contributions; and the title XVI program, or supplemental security income (SSI), which pays a needs-based benefit to the aged and to blind or disabled adults and children.

Administration of SSA programs involves six basic business processes:

- Enumeration
 - Processing new and replacement applications for Social Security identification numbers.
- Posting Earnings
 - Recording workers' annual wages/self-employment earnings and resolving discrepancies in postings.
- Determining Benefit Eligibility
 - Obtaining and adjudicating new applications for benefits for all Social Security programs.
- Processing Appeals on Disputed Cases
 - Reconsidering benefit denials or other adverse actions to determine whether the original decision should be upheld.
- Updating Beneficiary Records with Posteligibility Changes
 - Processing beneficiary reports of changes in circumstances and performing SSA-initiated reviews of continuing eligibility.

- Responding to Inquiries

- Conducting public information activities, as well as answering specific inquiries about eligibility and benefits.

SSA delivers service face-to-face, by telephone and via written correspondence. The public may choose to contact SSA at one of its 1,300 field offices (FO) or may telephone the local FO or a national 800 number service. On rare occasions where there is a special need, SSA representatives visit at home, in the hospital or at some other location to secure benefit applications or conduct other business.

SSA communicates benefit decisions in writing, issuing a formal notice when the application is adjudicated and whenever any benefit changes occur. Customer requests for information, such as a report of the amount of earnings posted to their records, are also often handled by mail.

Objectives of SSA Customer Satisfaction Surveys

SSA has as our most fundamental goal serving the American public with compassion, courtesy, efficiency and accuracy. In support of this goal, the Agency's Strategic Plan commits SSA to using critical input from the public to improve the ease and convenience of the service we deliver. This commitment led SSA to develop surveys that go beyond straight measurement of customer satisfaction to explore the reasons behind the perception of service.

SSA's service delivery evaluation surveys focus on our most significant interactions with our customers -- enumeration, determining eligibility for benefits and updating beneficiary records with posteligibility changes -- and consider the perception of service in the context of the individual's experience with the Agency. The surveys are designed to:

- Measure satisfaction with the quality of SSA service in performing specific types of business;
- Elicit the reasons behind the perceptions of good or poor service;
- Ascertain public expectations and preferences for service delivery; and
- Provide information on the demographic and programmatic characteristics of the populations that hold particular views.

The ultimate aim of the data collection is to provide insights that will lead to recommendations for corrective actions.

Survey Samples

SSA's sampling mechanisms draw on the Agency's automated data files of beneficiary records to obtain random selections of various types of transactions, such as initial awards of benefits. In addition to providing a means of selecting representative samples of our customers, using these automated records gives us access to demographic information (gender, age, geographic location of residence) and pertinent program data, including benefit type, payment amount, whether the claim was awarded at the initial decision level or on appeal, etc., for analytical purposes.

Sampled individuals are selected at the time the claim or action is adjudicated so that contact for the customer satisfaction survey can be made as close to the actual SSA contact as possible.

Survey Methodology

Survey interviews are conducted by trained SSA interviewers not involved in direct service delivery. Questionnaires are completed by telephone or during face-to-face contacts depending on the characteristics of the sample case.

The survey instruments are tailored to evaluate the type of action selected, with questions geared specifically to that process. In addition, there is a cohort of basic service evaluation questions that appears on all questionnaires so that results from the various different samples can be compared. These questions elicit satisfaction with service overall and with various specific aspects of service, such as employee courtesy, job knowledge, waiting time to receive service in the FOs and processing time to complete actions.

The questionnaires are comprised of rating questions, which generally use 5-point rating scales (e.g., "very good," "good," "fair," "poor," "very poor"), factual questions with response choices offered by the interviewer and open-ended opinion questions. For these, the interviewer records answers in the respondent's own words and then codes them according to a list of anticipated responses (with capacity to code "other" and record narrative).

Data Analysis

Service delivery evaluation survey results are entered into a personal computer data base designed in dBase IV and are then tabulated using the mainframe computer software package (Statistical Analysis System). Raw results are weighted to reflect the universe for the type of action sampled.

Responses to selected items are cross-tabulated with other responses or with pertinent program or demographic data so that direct comparisons may be drawn. In addition, multivariate analysis of important issues, such as the overall satisfaction rating is performed using the logistic regression technique (LOGIT). LOGIT considers the strength of the relationship

between the selected characteristic -- e.g., degree of satisfaction -- and other characteristics of the respondent. LOGIT determines which characteristics are statistically significant and assigns them a weight so that the strongest characteristics can be identified.

Findings About Customer Satisfaction

Survey results indicate that overall, most respondents are satisfied with the service they receive from SSA. But we have been able to gain a better understanding of specifically which groups in our public are more or less satisfied with SSA's service by breaking out their responses by program and by using information from SSA records (e.g., whether benefits were awarded only after the individual appealed the original decision to deny the claim), to gain more insight about their experience.

For example, we found that individuals awarded SSI benefits were consistently less satisfied than others, which may be due in part to the nature of this needs-based program. Taking this a step further, we found that for SSI awardees who had been denied benefits initially and approved only on appeal, this adverse experience had a strong negative impact on the perception of all aspects of service, even courtesy. This analysis points us to areas of focus for efforts to improve service.

We also gained insight about customer satisfaction by using LOGIT to analyze the overall rating of service. To determine which customer characteristics were most significant, we developed a LOGIT model explaining the overall rating based on various survey responses and program and demographic data about the respondents. We found that for all of our major customer types, the factors that had the greatest impact on the perception of overall service were the ratings of employee courtesy, job knowledge and the time it takes SSA to process actions. Respondents who rated these aspects of service highly were most likely to rate overall service highly as well. In addition to explaining the overall service rating, this type of analysis tells us what is most important to our customers.

Finally, we ask respondents to explain why they felt service was only "fair," "poor" or "very poor" when they have rated any particular aspect of service that way. These narrative responses may provide clues for corrective actions.

Awareness and Preference for Service Delivery Options

The survey contained questions asking respondents about the service delivery methods they had used, their awareness of the availability of other options and their preferences for the future.

Many who had visited FOs for face-to-face interviews were unaware that they could have conducted their business by telephone and expressed a preference for using the telephone in the future. Analysis by type of benefit received and geographic location of residence revealed significant differences among the various respondent groups regarding these issues.

Similar analysis shed light on awareness and preferences for other services SSA offers, such as interview appointments and direct deposit of benefits to a bank account.

Analysis of SSA services used also provided insights about the way service was rated. For instance, respondents who visited FOs were asked to rate (on a 5-point scale from "very good" to "very poor") the amount of time they had to wait to receive service. Those with an appointment for the interview gave much more positive ratings than those without, supporting SSA's policy of promoting the use of appointments.

Other Management Information

The service delivery evaluation also provides valuable management information about the diverse populations SSA serves and any special needs they might have.

For instance, providing quality service to our growing non-English speaking populations is an issue of current concern to the Agency. Therefore, the survey includes questions about language preference and related issues such as how non-English speakers conduct their business with SSA and any problems they encounter. Through the analysis of survey results, we were able to identify which of our workloads and which of our field components have been most affected by the need to provide service to non-English speakers and what languages are involved. We can compare the service ratings of English and non-English speakers to find any inconsistencies in the levels of service we provide.

The survey elicits similar information about other special populations such as the hearing impaired and those who have limitations that make it difficult to interact with SSA.

Survey Instruments

Four survey instruments are used to conduct the SSA customer satisfaction surveys:

- Service Delivery Questionnaire - Initial Awards
- Service Delivery Questionnaire - Initial Denials/Disallowances
- Service Delivery Questionnaire - SSI Redeterminations
- Service Delivery Questionnaire - Enumeration

Facsimiles of these surveys follow.

SERVICE DELIVERY QUESTIONNAIRE

INITIAL AWARDS

SSN	_____	LAST NAME	_____	REGION	_____
STUDY NUMBER	_____	FO CODE	_____	EXCLUSION	_____
RESPONDENT	_____				
INTERVIEW DATE	_____	INTERVIEW METHOD	_____	INTERVIEW BEGAN	_____
				ENDED	_____

KNOWLEDGE OF SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS

1. How did you know or learn that you could apply for Social Security benefits?

(Do not read responses. Circle up to five responses.)

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
| A. Senior citizens organization | H. Employer/union |
| B. Relatives/friends | I. School |
| C. Attorney | J. Church |
| D. Professional disability consultant | K. Media |
| E. Advocacy group | L. SSA information |
| F. Social services agency | M. Common knowledge |
| G. Health care provider | X. Does not remember |
| | Z. Other |

(Go to 2)

INITIAL CONTACT

2. How did you first make contact with Social Security regarding the possibility of filing a claim?

(Circle only one response.)

- | | |
|--|--|
| A. Called SSA's 800 telephone number | F. SSA representative made contact (e.g., claim was filed because of a referral from one program to another within the field office) |
| B. Called your local SSA office | G. Wrote to SSA |
| C. Visited the SSA office/contact station | X. Does not remember |
| D. Met with SSA representative at community center, hospital, or other public location | Z. Other (Specify in Remarks) |
| E. Had someone else, such as a relative or friend, make the contact | |

(Go to 3)

BENEFIT ESTIMATES

Complete questions 3 and 4 if the person is age 60 or over and the claim was for retirement, aged spouse's, or widow(er)'s benefits. Otherwise, go to question 5.

3. Did you get an estimate of your benefit amount from Social Security before the day you filed for benefits?

- Y. Yes (Go to 3a)
N. No (Go to 3d)
X. Does not remember (Go to 5)



3a. How far in advance of filing was the most recent benefit estimate obtained?

(Circle only one response.)

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| A. Less than 2 months | D. Over 1 year |
| B. Over 2 months but less than 6 months | X. Does not remember |
| C. Over 6 months but less than 1 year | |

(Go to 3b)

3b. Is this the only benefit estimate you've ever requested?

- Y. Yes
N. No
X. Does not remember

(Go to 3c)

Complete question 3c if the respondent is the wage earner. Otherwise, go to question 4.

3c. Did you ever review Social Security's record of your earnings before you filed for benefits?

- Y. Yes (Go to 3c1)
N. No (Go to 4)
X. Does not remember (Go to 4)

3c1. If you noticed that something was wrong with your earnings record, what did you do?

(Circle only one response.)

- | | |
|---|---|
| A. SSA's records were correct | E. Wrote a letter to SSA (did not include evidence) |
| B. Called SSA | F. Did not do anything |
| C. Visited the SSA office | X. Does not remember |
| D. Mailed evidence of correct earnings to SSA | |

(Go to 4)

3d. Did you know that you could have requested an estimate of what your benefit would be before you filed?

- Y. Yes (Go to 3d1)
N. No (Go to 3d2)

3d1. Why didn't you get one?

(Do not read responses. Circle up to five responses.)

- | | |
|---|--|
| A. Not concerned about benefit amount; not a factor in decision to file | D. Received estimate from employer, other outside source |
| B. Filed on the spur of the moment | Z. Other (Specify in Remarks) |
| C. Planned to; never got around to it | |

(Go to 4)

3d2. Would you have requested a benefit estimate if you had known it was available?

- Y. Yes
N. No

(Go to 4)

4. Did you feel that you had enough information about what your benefit amount would be before you actually applied for benefits?

- Y. Yes (Go to 5)
- N. No (Go to 4a)
- X. Does not remember (Go to 5)

4a. Why not? (Record in Remarks)

INTERVIEW METHOD

5. Did the interview for completing your application take place:

(Circle only one response.)

- A. In person - visited office/contact station (Go to 5a)
- B. In person - Social Security representative visited (at home, hospital) (Go to 5a)
- C. By telephone (Go to 6)
- D. No application interview took place (application submitted by mail; no personal contact with SSA) (Go to 30)
- X. Does not remember (Go to 6)

5a. Were you aware that you could have filed an application over the phone?

- Y. Yes (Go to 5a1)
- N. No (go to 6)

5a1. Why did you choose not to use the telephone to file?

(Do not read responses. Circle up to five responses.)

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| A. Like face-to-face contact | E. Hearing impairment |
| B. Did not want to mail documents | F. Complexity of forms, process |
| C. Office convenient; walked in | G. SSA requested |
| D. Language barrier | Z. Other (Specify in Remarks) |

(Go to 6)

APPOINTMENTS

6. Did you schedule an appointment with Social Security to file your application?

- Y. Yes (Go to 6a)
- N. No (Go to 6d)
- X. Does not remember (go to 7)

6a. How long did you have to wait for an appointment?

(Circle only one response.)

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| A. Less than 1 week | D. 3 to less than 4 weeks |
| B. 1 to less than 2 weeks | E. 4 weeks or more |
| C. 2 to less than 3 weeks | X. Does not remember |

(Go to 6b)

6b. How satisfied were you with how soon you got an appointment?

(Read the Rating Scale)

- A. Satisfied
- B. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- C. Dissatisfied

(Go to 6c)

6c. Was your appointment kept on the scheduled day and time?

- Y. Yes (Go to 6e)
N. No (Go to 6c1)
X. Does not remember (Go to 6e)

6c1. What happened?

(Circle only one response.)

- A. You decided to come in before the scheduled day
B. SSA contacted you before the scheduled day
C. You postponed to another day
D. SSA postponed to another day
E. SSA was ____ hours ____ minutes late for the interview
F. You were ____ hours ____ minutes late for the interview

Note: If the respondent does not remember how late the interview was, enter 9 for hours and 99 for minutes.

(Go to 6e)

6d. Were you aware that you could have scheduled an appointment to complete your application?

- Y. Yes (Go to 6d1)
N. No (Go to 6e)

6d1. Why didn't you schedule an appointment?

(Do not read responses. Circle up to five responses.)

- A. Walked in - "spur of the moment" D. No particular reason
B. Didn't want to wait for appointment Z. Other (Specify in Remarks)
C. Didn't want to commit to particular time

(Go to 6e)

6e. Would you prefer an appointment in the future?

- Y. Yes (Go to 6e1)
N. No (Go to 6e2)

Ask the respondent to fill in the blank in the statement below (6e1). Show all time periods in days (i.e., enter 7 for 1 week, 14 for 2 weeks), etc.

6e1. Good service would mean having to wait no more than ____ days to get an appointment.

6e2. Why wouldn't you use an appointment in the future?

(Record in Remarks)

Complete question 7 if the respondent did not have an appointment for the interview, or does not remember having an appointment (question 6 is "N" or "X"). Otherwise, go to question 8.

WAITING TIME

7. On the day you applied for benefits, from the time you walked into the office, about how long did you wait to see the person who helped you with your application form?

____ hours ____ minutes

7a. How long was your wait compared to what you expected?

(Read the Rating Scale)

- A. Much shorter than expected
- B. Shorter than expected
- C. About as expected
- D. Longer than expected
- E. Much longer than expected

(Go to 7b)

7b. How long did you expect to wait?

___ hours ___ minutes

(Go to 7c)

Ask the respondent to fill in the blank in the statement below (7c).

7c. Good service would mean waiting no longer than ___ hours ___ minutes to see the interviewer.

(Go to 8)

Note: If the respondent has no opinion or does not remember, enter 9 for hours and 99 for minutes.

CONCURRENT CLAIMS

Complete question 8 if the applicant filed for title II benefits in conjunction with a title XVI claim (or vice versa). For title II only or title XVI only disability cases which required a medical decision, go to question 9. For all other title II cases, go to question 10. For all other title XVI cases, go to question 11.

8. Did you file your applications for Social Security and SSI benefits on the same day?

- Y. Yes (Go to 8a)
- N. No (Go to 8b)
- X. Does not remember (Go to 9)

8a. Did the same person help you complete both application forms?

- Y. Yes (Go to 9)
- N. No (Go to 8a1)
- X. Does not remember (Go to 9)

8a1. How long did you have to wait in between interviews?

___ hours ___ minutes

Note: If the respondent does not remember, enter 9 for hours and 99 for minutes. If the respondent did not wait between interviews, enter 0 for hours and 00 for minutes.

(Go to 8b)

8b. Did having two separate interviews to complete the application forms cause a problem for you?

- Y. Yes (Go to 8b1)
- N. No (Go to 9)
- X. Does not remember (Go to 9)

8b1. What was the problem(s)?

(Do not read responses. Circle up to five responses.)

- A. Had to wait between interviews (same day)
- B. Had to file second claim on a different day
- C. Had to repeat the same information
- D. Had to move to different desk; caused physical discomfort
- Z. Other (Specify in Remarks)

(Go to 8b2)

8b2. How could Social Security have handled your interview better?

(Record in Remarks)

(Go to 9)

FORM SSA-3368/SSA-3820

9. Before your interview, did Social Security send or give you a form to fill out yourself with medical information, such as your doctors' names and addresses, dates of hospitalization, and details about your condition?

- Y. Yes (Go to 9a)
- N. No (Go to 10)
- X. Does not remember (Go to 10)

9a. Were you able to fill out the whole form by yourself?

- Y. Yes (Go to 10)
- N. No (Go to 9a1)
- X. Does not remember (Go to 10)

9a1. Who helped you?

(Circle up to five responses.)

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| A. SSA representative | F. Social services agency |
| B. Relatives/friends | G. Health care provider |
| C. Attorney | H. Employer/union |
| D. Professional disability consultant | X. Does not remember |
| E. Advocacy group | Z. Other (Specify in Remarks) |

(Go to 9a2)

9a2. What was hard about completing the form?

(Do not read responses. Circle up to five responses.)

- A. Difficulty understanding the questions
- B. Difficulty obtaining necessary information (e.g., doctors' addresses)
- C. Difficulty recalling information (e.g., dates of hospitalization, work history)
- D. Non-English speaking
- E. Form was too long
- F. Format too complicated
- Z. Other (Specify in Remarks)

(Go to 10)

EARNINGS RECORDS

Complete question 10 for all title II wage earners and for other title II beneficiaries for whom an earnings record review was required by POMS. For all others, go to question 11.

10. When you filed for benefits, did the interviewer discuss Social Security's records of your [the wage earner's] earnings with you?

Y. Yes (Go to 10a)

N. No (Go to 11)

X. Does not remember (Go to 11)

10a. Did you find that the earnings record was correct?

Y. Yes (Go to 10b)

N. No (Go to 10a1)

X. Does not remember (Go to 11)

10a1. What was wrong?

(Do not read responses. Circle up to five responses.)

A. Lag earnings not posted

B. Prior earnings not posted

C. Some posted earnings belonged to someone else

D. Amount posted was incorrect

X. Does not remember

Z. Other (Specify in Remarks)

(Go to 10a2)

10a2. Did the interviewer discuss with you what would be done to correct the earnings record?

Y. Yes

N. No

X. Does not remember

(Go to 10a3)

10a3. Did you feel that you received good service from Social Security in resolving the earnings record problem?

Y. Yes (Go to 10b)

N. No (Go to 10a4)

10a4. What do you feel Social Security could have done to give you better service?

(Record in Remarks)

(Go to 10b)

10b. Was there any other information about the earnings that you would have found helpful?

Y. Yes (Go to 10b1)

N. No (Go to 11)

X. Does not remember (Go to 11)

10b1. What other information would you have wanted?

(Record in Remarks)

(Go to 11)

CLARITY OF INTERVIEWER'S EXPLANATIONS

- 11. How clearly did the interviewer who completed your application explain what you needed to do for your claim and what would happen next, for instance what documents you had to submit?**

(Read the Rating Scale)

- A. Clearly
- B. Somewhat clearly
- C. Not clearly
- D. Did not explain
- E. Does not remember

(Go to 12)

- 12. Did the interviewer tell you about how long it would take Social Security to process your claim?**

- Y. Yes (Go to 12a)
- N. No (Go to 13)
- X. Does not remember (Go to 13)

- 12a. Was the actual length of time shorter, longer, or just about what the interviewer estimated?**

(Circle only one response.)

- A. Shorter
- B. Longer
- C. Just about as estimated
- X. Does not remember

(Go to 13)

REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES

- 13. How clearly did the interviewer explain what changes you need to report to Social Security, for example, if you go to work or your earnings change?**

(Read the Rating Scale)

- A. Clearly
- B. Somewhat clearly
- C. Not clearly
- D. Did not explain
- E. Does not remember

(Go to 14)

- 14. Were you provided with a copy of written instructions on reporting changes to Social Security?**

- Y. Yes
- N. No
- X. Does not remember

(Go to 15)

LANGUAGE ISSUES

- 15. Do you usually speak a language other than English?**

- Y. Yes (Go to 15a)
- N. No (Go to 16)

15a. What language do you usually speak?

(Circle only one response.)

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| A. Spanish | I. Cambodian |
| B. Russian | J. Polish |
| C. Vietnamese | K. Hindi/Indian languages |
| D. Korean | L. Laotian/Thai |
| E. Chinese | M. Hmong |
| F. Tagalog (Filipino) | N. French/Creole/Haitian |
| G. Arabic/Middle Eastern languages | O. Greek |
| H. Italian | Z. Other (Specify in Remarks) |

(Go to 15b)

15b. Do you read [that language]?

- Y. Yes
N. No

(Go to 15c)

15c. Were you able to get along in English by yourself during your interview with Social Security?

- Y. Yes (Go to 15c1)
N. No (Go to 15c3)

15c1. Even though you were able to get along in English, did you feel you had any special problems because of language?

- Y. Yes (Go to 15c2)
N. No (Go to 16)
X. Does not remember (Go to 16)

15c2. What were they?

(Record in Remarks)

(Go to 16)

15c3. Did you have your own interpreter with you to help with your interview?

- A. Yes—Brought own interpreter (Go to 15c4)
B. No—SSA provided interpreter (Go to 16)
C. No—SSA employee spoke the language (Go to 16)
X. Does not remember (Go to 16)

15c4. Who was your interpreter?

(Circle only one response.)

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| A. Relative/friend over age 16 | E. Professional interpreter |
| B. Relative/friend under age 16 | F. Advocacy group |
| C. Social services agency | X. Does not remember |
| D. Church/religious organization | Z. Other (Specify in Remarks) |

(Go to 16)

16. Are you hearing impaired?

- Y. Yes (Go to 16a)
N. No (Go to 17)

16a. How was your interview conducted?

(Circle only one response.)

- A. You got along by yourself—read lips, wrote notes
- B. You brought your own signer
- C. SSA employee signed
- D. SSA provided non-employee signer
- E. Used TDD—text telephone (e.g., with Relay Service)
- X. Does not remember
- Z. Other (Specify in Remarks)

(Go to 17)

HELP REQUIRED—NON-SSA ASSISTANCE

17. Did you need help from someone not employed by Social Security to assist you in filing for benefits for any reason other than language [or hearing impairment]?

- Y. Yes (Go to 17a)
- N. No (Go to 18)
- X. Does not remember (Go to 18)

17a. Who helped you?

(Circle up to five responses.)

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| A. Senior citizens organization | H. Employer/union |
| B. Relatives/friends | I. School |
| C. Attorney | J. Church |
| D. Professional disability consultant | X. Does not remember |
| E. Advocacy group | Z. Other (Specify in Remarks) |
| F. Social services agency | |
| G. Health care provider | |

(Go to 17b)

17b. Why did you need help?

(Do not read responses. Circle up to five responses.)

- | | |
|---|---|
| A. Physical limitations (e.g., blindness) | E. Personal preference |
| B. Communication problems (e.g., speech impediment) | F. SSA policies confusing, hard to understand |
| C. Educational limitations | Z. Other (Specify in Remarks) |
| D. Transportation problems | |

(Go to 18)

RECONTACTS

18. After the day of your interview, did you have another telephone or in-person contact with Social Security before you got your first check or letter telling you that you would be receiving benefits? (For example, did they ask you for additional information or did you have questions?)

- Y. Yes (Go to 18a)
- N. No (Go to 19)
- X. Does not remember (Go to 19)

Note: Do not consider documents or forms submitted by mail as a result of the initial interview as a recontact; e.g., teleclaims that were returned by mail.

18a. How many more times were you in touch with Social Security?

— —

Note: Show 1 recontact if the respondent knows he had another contact but does not remember how many
(Go to 18b)

18b. For each recontact, ask the following three questions and enter the responses in the corresponding column using the codes under the column. (Up to five reason codes may be shown for a recontact; only one initiation and one completion code should be recorded per recontact.)

	What was the reason?	Did you contact Social Security or did they contact you?	How did you complete the contact?
Recontact 1	a. _____	b. _____	c. _____
Recontact 2	a. _____	b. _____	c. _____
Recontact 3	a. _____	b. _____	c. _____
Recontact 4	a. _____	b. _____	c. _____
Recontact 5	a. _____	b. _____	c. _____

Reason Codes

- A. Submitted application completed by telephone (or at previous visit)
- B. Submitted non-medical evidence
- C. Updated application after medical decision made
- D. Needed further information
- E. Reported change in circumstances
- F. Requested claim status
- G. Filed appeal
- H. Submitted medical evidence
- I. Had medical examination
- X. Does not remember
- Z. Other (Specify in Remarks)

Initiation Codes

- A. SSA telephoned you
- B. SSA wrote you
- C. SSA visited you
- D. You contacted SSA
- X. Does not remember

Completion Codes

- A. Telephone
- B. Visit
- C. Mail
- X. Does not remember

Note: Completion code must be 'B' (Visit) when reason code 'A' (submitted application) applies.

(Go to 19)

APPLICATION PROCESS

19. Was there anything about your experience filing for benefits that confused you?

Y. Yes (Go to 19a)

N. No (Go to 20)

X. Does not remember (Go to 20)

19a. What was confusing?

(Record in Remarks)

(Go to 20)

PREFERENCE FOR FUTURE BUSINESS

20. If you ever file another application, would you prefer to visit the office, telephone the local office, or telephone the 800 number?

(Circle only one response.)

- A. Visit office
- B. Telephone local office
- C. Telephone 800 number

(Go to 21)

21. If you had other business to conduct, such as reporting a change of address or obtaining information, how would you prefer to contact Social Security?

(Do not read responses. Circle only one response.)

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| A. Visit office | E. Write |
| B. Telephone local office | F. Depends on reason for contact |
| C. Telephone 800 number | Z. Other (Specify in Remarks) |
| D. Third party contact | |

Complete question 22 if the person would prefer to visit the office to file a claim or to conduct other future business. Complete question 23 if the person prefers the local telephone over the 800 number for either type of contact. Otherwise, go to question 24.

PREFERS VISITING FO

22. Why would you prefer to conduct your business by visiting the office?

(Do not read responses. Circle up to five responses.)

- | | |
|---|--|
| A. Faster service | G. Don't want to mail documents |
| B. More accurate service | H. Want receipt for transaction |
| C. Prefer face-to-face | I. Easier to understand SSA policies (complex transaction) |
| D. Language barrier | J. Can't get through on the telephone |
| E. Communication problem (e.g., deafness) | Z. Other (Specify in Remarks) |
| F. No telephone | |

PREFERS CALLING FO

23. Why do you prefer to telephone the local office rather than the 800 number?

(Do not read responses. Circle up to five responses.)

- | | |
|---|---|
| A. Faster service | F. Hard to understand 800 number employees because of regional dialect/accent |
| B. More accurate processing of actions | G. Can't get through on the 800 number (busy signal) |
| C. Know the employees at the local office | H. Kept on hold on the 800 number |
| D. Local office has the papers on the case | Z. Other (Specify in Remarks) |
| E. Local office more knowledgeable about SSA policies | |

UNDERSTANDING NOTICES

24. Generally, how easy or hard have the letters you received from Social Security about your benefits been to understand?

(Read the Rating Scale)

- | | |
|---|--|
| A. Very easy to understand (Go to 27) | D. Hard to understand (Go to 25) |
| B. Easy to understand (Go to 27) | E. Very hard to understand (Go to 25) |
| C. Neither easy nor hard to understand (Go to 27) | F. Did not read letter (Go to 27) |
| | X. Does not remember receiving letter (Go to 27) |

In addition to asking questions 25 and 26, ask the person the title of the notice(s) he had trouble with and record it in Remarks as well as any pertinent comments.

25. What made the letter(s) hard to understand?

(Do not read responses. Circle up to five responses.)

- A. Subject is hard to understand
- B. Words are too difficult to understand
- C. Not clearly written; points not clearly made
- D. Too lengthy
- E. Print size or quality

- F. Format
- G. Written in English; prefer foreign language
- H. Handwritten; at least partly illegible
- X. Does not remember
- Z. Other (Specify in Remarks)

(Go to 26)

26. Did you contact Social Security or ask someone else to help you understand the letter(s)?

- A. No (Go to 27)
- B. Contacted SSA (Go to 27)
- C. Contacted someone else (Go to 26a)
- X. Does not remember (Go to 27)

Note: If applicable, both codes B and C may be circled.

26a. Who?

(Circle up to five responses.)

- A. Senior citizens organization
- B. Relatives/friends
- C. Attorney
- D. Professional disability consultant
- E. Advocacy group
- F. Social services agency
- G. Health care provider

- H. Employer/union
- I. School
- J. Church
- X. Does not remember
- Z. Other (Specify in Remarks)

DIRECT DEPOSIT

Ask questions 27 - 30 only if the beneficiary does not have direct deposit. Otherwise, go to question 31.

27. When you filed for benefits, why did you choose to receive a paper check instead of having your benefits directly deposited to your bank account?

(Do not read responses. Circle up to five responses.)

- A. No bank account
- B. Prefer paper checks
- C. Wanted to see first check
- D. Safer to get paper check
- E. Confused about how direct deposit works

- F. Might cause problems getting claim processed
- G. Unaware - direct deposit never offered
- X. Does not remember
- Z. Other (Specify in Remarks)

Ask question 27a if the answer(s) to question 27 includes "prefer paper checks."

27a. Why do you prefer paper checks? (Record in Remarks)

Complete question 27b if the answer to question 27 is other than "no bank account." Otherwise, go to 28.

27b. Do you have a bank account?

Y. Yes
N. No

(Go to 28)

28. Do you usually pay a fee for cashing your check?

Y. Yes (Go to 28a)
N. No (Go to 28)

28a. How much do you usually pay?

\$ ____ . ____

Note: Enter money amounts in dollar and cents format (\$\$.cc); if the respondent does not remember, enter \$99.99.

(Go to 29)

29. Were the advantages of direct deposit ever explained to you?

Y. Yes
N. No
X. Does not remember

(Go to 30)

30. Are you interested in changing to direct deposit?

Y. Yes
N. No
U. Undecided

(Go to 31)

OVERALL RATING

31. Overall, how would rate the service that Social Security has given you?

(Read the Rating Scale)

A. Very Good
B. Good
C. Fair
D. Poor
E. Very Poor

(Go to 32)

RATING ASPECTS OF SERVICE

32. Now I would like you to rate Social Security's performance in several specific areas of service using the following scales:

- A. Very good
- B. Good
- C. Fair
- D. Poor
- E. Very poor
- F. No opinion/not applicable
- X. Does not remember

Note: Rotate the order in which the following items are read.

32a. The amount of time you had to wait to be served in the office.

- A. B. C. D. E. F. X.

If the rating was fair, poor or very poor (C, D, or E), ask question 32a1.

32a1. Why did you rate waiting time as _____ (fill in response)?

(Record in Remarks)

32b. The courtesy of the Social Security employees you dealt with.

- A. B. C. D. E. F. X.

If the rating was fair, poor or very poor (C, D, or E), ask question 32b1.

32b1. Why did you rate the courtesy of the employees as _____ (fill in response)?

(Record in Remarks)

32c. How knowledgeable the Social Security employees were (i.e., their expertise).

- A. B. C. D. E. F. X.

If the rating was fair, poor or very poor (C, D, or E), ask question 32c1.

32c1. Why did you rate the knowledge of the employees as _____ (fill in response)?

(Record in Remarks)

32d. The amount of assistance the Social Security employees gave you (i.e., how helpful they were).

- A. B. C. D. E. F. X.

If the rating was fair, poor or very poor (C, D, or E), ask question 32d1.

32d1. Why did you rate the assistance provided by the employees as _____ (fill in response)?

(Record in Remarks)

32e. The overall amount of time it took Social Security to process your claim.

- A. B. C. D. E. F. X.

If the rating was fair, poor or very poor (C, D, or E), ask question 32e1.

32e1. Why did you rate the time it took Social Security to process your claim as _____ (fill in response)?

(Record in Remarks)

32f. The convenience (e.g., the availability of parking and/or public transportation) of the Social Security office location that you visited (or that handled your claim, if filed by telephone).

A. B. C. D. E. F. X.

If the rating was fair, poor or very poor (C, D, or E), ask question 32f1.

32f1. Why did you rate the Social Security office location as _____ (fill in response)?

(Record in Remarks)

32g. The hours that the Social Security office was open.

A. B. C. D. E. F. X.

If the rating was fair, poor or very poor (C, D, or E), ask question 32g1.

32g1. Why did you rate Social Security's office hours as _____ (fill in response)?

(Record in Remarks)

32h. The Social Security office itself (e.g. the physical appearance, privacy, etc.)

A. B. C. D. E. F. X.

If the rating was fair, poor or very poor (C, D, or E), ask question 32h1.

32h1. Why did you rate the appearance of the Social Security office as _____ (fill in response)?

(Record in Remarks)

(Go to 33)

RANKING ASPECTS OF SERVICE

33. Some aspects of Social Security's service may be more important to you than others. I would like you to tell me the two aspects of service that are the most important to you, and the two that are least important.

Read the entire list of aspects of service to the respondent. (Rotate the order in which the items are read.) Enter the alpha code corresponding to the two aspects of service the respondent considers most important in items 33a and 33b below and the codes for the two least important in 33c and 33d.

A. The amount of time you have to wait to be served in the office.

B. The courtesy of Social Security employees.

C. The job knowledge of Social Security employees.

D. The assistance Social Security employees provide (how helpful they are).

E. The overall amount of time it takes Social Security to process a claim.

F. The convenience of the Social Security office location.

G. The hours that the Social Security office is open.

H. The Social Security office itself (e.g., the physical appearance, privacy, etc.).

36. How would you rate Social Security's service compared to the service you get from other Federal, State, and local government agencies?

(Read the Rating Scale)

- A. Social Security is much better than others
- B. Social Security is somewhat better than others
- C. Social Security is about as good as others
- D. Social Security is somewhat worse than others
- E. Social Security is much worse than others
- F. Can't say, have had no contact with other government agencies

REMARKS

Question Number

Remarks

Question Number

Remarks

Question Number

Remarks

Three horizontal number lines are provided for recording answers. Each line has 11 tick marks, creating 10 equal intervals. The lines are empty and intended for the student to write their answers to the problems.

Question Number

Remarks

Question Number

Remarks

Three horizontal number lines are provided for recording data. Each line has 21 tick marks, with the first tick mark on the left labeled '0' and the last tick mark on the right labeled '20'. The lines are empty, intended for students to draw a bar graph.

Question Number

Remarks

REMARKS

Question Number

1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

Remarks

Three horizontal number lines are provided for recording data. Each line has 21 tick marks, but no numerical values are written on them.

Question Number

NAME _____

Remarks

Question Number

Remarks

Three horizontal number lines are provided for recording data. Each line has 11 tick marks, creating 10 equal intervals. The lines are empty, intended for the student to draw a histogram.

Question Number

Remarks

Question Number







Remarks

Three horizontal number lines are provided for recording data. Each line has 11 tick marks, creating 10 equal intervals. The lines are empty, intended for the student to draw a histogram.

Question Number

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Remarks

SERVICE DELIVERY QUESTIONNAIRE

INITIAL DENIALS/DISALLOWANCES

SSN	_____	LAST NAME	_____	REGION	_____
STUDY NUMBER	_____	FO CODE	_____	EXCLUSION	_____
				RESPONDENT	_____
INTERVIEW DATE	_____	INTERVIEW METHOD	<u>T</u>	INTERVIEW BEGAN	____:____
				ENDED	____:____

INTERVIEW METHOD

1. Where did the interview for completing your application take place:

(Circle only one response.)

- A. In person - visited office/contact station (Go to 2)
- B. In person - Social Security representative visited (at home, hospital) (Go to 2)
- C. By telephone (Go to 2)
- D. No application interview took place (application submitted by mail; no personal contact with SSA) (Go to 11)
- X. Does not remember (Go to 2)

APPOINTMENTS

2. Did you schedule an appointment with Social Security to file your application?

- Y. Yes
- N. No
- X. Does not remember

(Go to 3)

FORM SSA-3368/SSA-3820

Complete question 3 for all disability cases that required a DDS decision. For all other title II cases, go to question 4.
For all other title XVI cases, go to question 5.

3. Before your interview, did Social Security send or give you a form to fill out yourself with medical information, such as your doctors' names and addresses, dates of hospitalization, and details about your condition?

- Y. Yes (Go to 3a)
- N. No (Go to 4)
- X. Does not remember (Go to 4)

3a. Were you able to fill out the whole form by yourself?

- Y. Yes (Go to 4)
- N. No (Go to 3a1)
- X. Does not remember (Go to 4)

3a1. Who helped you?

(Circle up to five responses.)

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| A. SSA representative | F. Social services agency |
| B. Relatives/friends | G. Health care provider |
| C. Attorney | H. Employer/union |
| D. Professional disability consultant | X. Does not remember |
| E. Advocacy group | Z. Other (Specify in Remarks) |

(Go to 3a2)

3a2. What was hard about completing the form?

(Do not read responses. Circle up to five responses.)

- A. Difficulty understanding the questions
- B. Difficulty obtaining necessary information (e.g., doctors' addresses)
- C. Difficulty recalling information (e.g., dates of hospitalization, work history)
- D. Non-English speaking
- E. Form was too long
- F. Format too complicated
- Z. Other (Specify in Remarks)

(Go to 4)

EARNINGS RECORDS

Complete question 4 for all title II wage earners and for other title II beneficiaries (e.g., widows) for whom earnings record review was required by POMS. For all others, go to question 5.

4. When you filed for benefits, did the interviewer discuss Social Security's records of your [the wage earner's] earnings with you?

- Y. Yes (Go to 4a)
- N. No (Go to 5)
- X. Does not remember (Go to 5)

4a. Did you find that the earnings record was correct?

- Y. Yes (Go to 5)
- N. No (Go to 4a1)
- X. Does not remember (Go to 5)

4a1. What was wrong?

(Do not read responses. Circle up to five responses.)

- A. Lag earnings not posted
- B. Prior earnings not posted
- C. Some posted earnings belonged to someone else
- D. Amount posted was incorrect
- X. Does not remember
- Z. Other (Specify in Remarks)

(Go to 4a2)

4a2. Did the interviewer discuss with you what would be done to correct the earnings record?

- Y. Yes
- N. No
- X. Does not remember

(Go to 4a3)

4a3. Did you feel that you received good service from Social Security in resolving the earnings record problem?

- Y. Yes
- N. No

(Go to 5)

CLARITY OF INTERVIEWER'S EXPLANATIONS

5. How clearly did the interviewer who completed your application explain what you needed to do for your claim and what would happen next, for instance what documents you had to submit?

(Read the Rating Scale)

- A. Clearly
- B. Somewhat clearly
- C. Not clearly
- D. Did not explain
- E. Does not remember

(Go to 6)

LANGUAGE ISSUES

6. Do you usually speak a language other than English?

- Y. Yes (Go to 6a)
- N. No (Go to 7)

6a. What language do you usually speak?

(Circle only one response.)

- A. Spanish
- B. Russian
- C. Vietnamese
- D. Korean
- E. Chinese
- F. Tagalog (Filipino)
- G. Arabic/Middle Eastern languages
- H. Italian

- I. Cambodian
- J. Polish
- K. Hindi/Indian languages
- L. Laotian/Thai
- M. Hmong
- N. French/Creole/Haitian
- O. Greek
- Z. Other (Specify in Remarks)

(Go to 6b)

6b. Do you read [that language]?

- Y. Yes
- N. No

(Go to 6c)

6c. Were you able to get along in English by yourself during your interview with Social Security?

- Y. Yes (Go to 6c1)
- N. No (Go to 6c3)

6c1. Even though you were able to get along in English, did you feel you had any special problems because of language?

- Y. Yes (Go to 6c2)
- N. No (Go to 7)
- X. Does not remember (Go to 7)

6c2. What were they?

(Record in Remarks)

(Go to 7)

6c3. Did you have your own interpreter with you to help with your interview?

(Circle only one response.)

- A. Yes—Brought own interpreter (Go to 6c4)
- B. No—SSA provided interpreter (Go to 7)
- C. No—SSA employee spoke the language (Go to 7)
- X. Does not remember (Go to 7)

6c4. Who was your interpreter?

(Circle only one response.)

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| A. Relative/friend over age 16 | E. Professional interpreter |
| B. Relative/friend under age 16 | F. Advocacy group |
| C. Social services agency | X. Does not remember |
| D. Church/religious organization | Z. Other (Specify in Remarks) |

(Go to 7)

7. Are you hearing impaired?

- Y. Yes (Go to 7a)
- N. No (Go to 8)

7a. How was your interview conducted?

(Circle only one response.)

- A. You got along by yourself—read lips, wrote notes
- B. You brought your own signer
- C. SSA employee signed
- D. SSA provided non-employee signer
- E. Used TDD—text telephone (e.g., with Relay Service)
- X. Other (Specify in Remarks)

(Go to 8)

HELP REQUIRED—NON-SSA ASSISTANCE

8. Did you need help from someone not employed by Social Security to assist you in filing for benefits for any reason other than language [or hearing impairment]?

- Y. Yes (Go to 8a)
- N. No (Go to 9)
- X. Does not remember (Go to 9)

8a. Who helped you?

(Circle up to five responses.)

- A. Senior citizens organization
- B. Relatives/friends
- C. Attorney
- D. Advocacy group
- E. Social services agency
- F. Health care provider
- G. Employer/union

- H. School
- I. Church
- J. Professional disability consultant
- X. Does not remember
- Z. Other (Specify in Remarks)

(Go to 8b)

8b. Why did you need help?

(Do not read responses. Circle up to five responses.)

- A. Physical limitations (e.g., blindness)
- B. Communication problems
(e.g., speech impediment)
- C. Educational limitations
- D. Transportation problems

- E. Personal preference
- F. SSA policies confusing, hard to understand
- Z. Other (Specify in Remarks)

(Go to 9)

RECONTACTS

9. After the day of your interview, did you have another telephone or in-person contact with Social Security before you got the letter telling you that you were not eligible for benefits? (For example, did they ask you for additional information or did you have questions?)

- Y. Yes (Go to 9a)
- N. No (Go to 10)
- X. Does not remember (Go to 10)

Note: Do not consider documents or forms submitted by mail as a result of the initial interview as a recontact; e.g., teleclaims that were returned by mail.

9a. How many more times were you in touch with Social Security after the day of your interview?

— —

Note: Show 1 recontact if the respondent knows he had another contact but does not remember how many.

(Go to 9b)

- 9b. For each recontact, ask the following three questions and enter the responses in the corresponding column using the codes under the column. (Up to five reason codes may be shown in the Reason block for a particular recontact; only one initiation and one completion code should be recorded per recontact.)

	What was the reason?	Did you contact Social Security or did they contact you?	How did you complete the contact?
Recontact 1	a. _____	b. _____	c. _____
Recontact 2	a. _____	b. _____	c. _____
Recontact 3	a. _____	b. _____	c. _____
Recontact 4	a. _____	b. _____	c. _____
Recontact 5	a. _____	b. _____	c. _____

Reason Codes

- A. Submitted application completed by telephone (or at previous visit)
- B. Submitted non-medical evidence
- C. Needed further information
- D. Reported change in circumstances
- E. Requested claim status
- F. Submitted medical evidence
- G. Had medical examination
- X. Does not remember
- Z. Other (Specify in Remarks)

Initiation Codes

- A. SSA telephoned you
- B. SSA wrote you
- C. SSA visited you
- D. You contacted SSA
- X. Does not remember

Completion Codes

- A. Telephone
- B. Visit
- C. Mail
- X. Does not remember

Note: Completion code must be 'B' (Visit) when reason code 'A' (submitted application) applies.

(Go to 10)

UNDERSTANDING NOTICES

10. When your application for benefits was turned down, Social Security sent you a letter explaining why. How easy or hard was it to understand the letter explaining why you were not eligible for benefits?

(Read the Rating Scale)

- A. Very easy to understand (Go to 11)
- B. Easy to understand (Go to 11)
- C. Neither easy nor hard to understand (Go to 11)

- D. Hard to understand (Go to 10a)
- E. Very hard to understand (Go to 10a)
- X. Does not remember receiving notice (Go to 12)

10a. What made the explanation hard to understand?

(Do not read responses. Circle up to five responses.)

- A. Disagree with decision on claim
- B. Don't understand reason for denial (don't understand SSA policy)
- C. Words are too difficult to understand
- D. Not clearly written; points not clearly made
- E. Too lengthy

- F. Print size or quality
- G. Format
- H. Written in English; prefer foreign language
- I. Handwritten; at least partly illegible
- X. Does not remember
- Z. Other (Specify in Remarks)

(Go to 11)

11. The letter also explained what to do if you think Social Security's decision on your case was wrong. How easy or hard was it to understand the explanation of what to do if you disagreed with Social Security's decision?

(Read the Rating Scale)

- | | |
|---|---|
| A. Very easy to understand (Go to 12) | D. Hard to understand (Go to 11a) |
| B. Easy to understand (Go to 12) | E. Very hard to understand (Go to 11a) |
| C. Neither easy nor hard to understand (Go to 12) | X. Does not remember explanation of what to do (Go to 12) |

11a. What made the explanation hard to understand?

(Do not read responses. Circle up to five responses.)

- | | |
|---|---|
| A. Subject is hard to understand | F. Format |
| B. Words are too difficult to understand | G. Written in English |
| C. Not clearly written; points not clearly made | H. Handwritten; at least partly illegible |
| D. Too lengthy | X. Does not remember |
| E. Print size or quality | Z. Other (Specify in Remarks) |

(Go to 12)

OVERALL RATING

12. Overall, how would you rate the service that Social Security has given you?

(Read the Rating Scale)

- A. Very Good
B. Good
C. Fair
D. Poor
E. Very Poor

(Go to 13)

RATING ASPECTS OF SERVICE

13. Now I would like you to rate Social Security's performance in several specific areas of service using the following scales:

- A. Very good
B. Good
C. Fair
D. Poor
E. Very poor
F. No opinion/not applicable
X. Does not remember

Note: Rotate the order in which the following items are read.

13a. The amount of time you had to wait to be served in the office.

- A. B. C. D. E. F. X.

If the rating was fair, poor or very poor (C, D, or E), ask question 13a1.

13a1. Why did you rate waiting time as _____ (fill in response)?

(Record in Remarks)

13b. The courtesy of the Social Security employees you dealt with.

A. B. C. D. E. F. X.

If the rating was fair, poor or very poor (C, D, or E), ask question 13b1.

13b1. Why did you rate the courtesy of the employees as _____ (fill in response)?

(Record in Remarks)

13c. How knowledgeable the Social Security employees were (i.e., their expertise).

A. B. C. D. E. F. X.

If the rating was fair, poor or very poor (C, D, or E), ask question 13c1.

13c1. Why did you rate the knowledge of the employees as _____ (fill in response)?

(Record in Remarks)

13d. The amount of assistance the Social Security employees gave you (i.e., how helpful they were).

A. B. C. D. E. F. X.

If the rating was fair, poor or very poor (C, D, or E), ask question 13d1.

13d1. Why did you rate the assistance provided by the employees as _____ (fill in response)?

(Record in Remarks)

13e. The overall amount of time it took Social Security to process your claim.

A. B. C. D. E. F. X.

If the rating was fair, poor or very poor (C, D, or E), ask question 13e1.

13e1. Why did you rate the time it took Social Security to process your claim as _____ (fill in response)?

(Record in Remarks)

13f. The convenience (e.g., the availability of parking and/or public transportation) of the Social Security office location that you visited (or that handled your claim, if filed by telephone).

A. B. C. D. E. F. X.

If the rating was fair, poor or very poor (C, D, or E), ask question 13f1.

13f1. Why did you rate the Social Security office location as _____ (fill in response)?

(Record in Remarks)

13g. The hours that the Social Security office was open.

A. B. C. D. E. F. X.

If the rating was fair, poor or very poor (C, D, or E), ask question 13g1.

13g1. Why did you rate Social Security's office hours as _____ (fill in response)?

(Record in Remarks)

13h. The Social Security office itself (e.g., the physical appearance, privacy, etc.)

A. B. C. D. E. F. X.

If the rating was fair, poor or very poor (C, D, or E), ask question 13h1.

13h1. Why did you rate the appearance of the Social Security office as _____ (fill in response)?

(Record in Remarks)

(Go to 14)

RANKING ASPECTS OF SERVICE

14. Some of these aspects of Social Security's service may be more important to you than others. I would like you to tell me the two aspects of service that are the most important to you, and the two that are least important.

Read the entire list of aspects of service to the respondent. (Rotate the order in which the following items are read.) Enter the alpha code corresponding to the two aspects of service the respondent considers most important in items 14a and 14b below, and the codes for the two least important in 14c and 14d.

- A. The amount of time you have to wait to be served in the office.
- B. The courtesy of Social Security employees.
- C. The job knowledge of Social Security employees.
- D. The assistance Social Security employees provide (how helpful they are).
- E. The overall amount of time it takes Social Security to process a claim.
- F. The convenience of the Social Security office location.
- G. The hours that the Social Security office is open.
- H. The Social Security office itself (e.g., the physical appearance, privacy, etc.).

MOST IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF SERVICE

14a. _____ 14b. _____

LEAST IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF SERVICE

14c. _____ 14d. _____

(Go to 15)

15. Are there any other aspects of our service that are important to you?

Y. Yes (Specify in Remarks)
N. No

(Go to 16)

16. Is there anything else you would like to say about Social Security's service?

N, No (Go to 17)

Subject	16b. Positive	16c. Negative
A. Telephone service (availability/accessibility)	_____	_____
B. FO facilities (location, physical appearance, etc.)	_____	_____
C. Appointments/waiting time	_____	_____
D. Employee attitude/expertise/assistance	_____	_____
E. Information provided	_____	_____
F. Claims process (e.g. accuracy, processing time, decision)	_____	_____
G. Program policy	_____	_____
H. Special services (e.g. non-English speaking, hearing impaired, etc.)	_____	_____
Z. Other (Specify in Remarks)	_____	_____

(Go to 17)

(Read the Rating Scale)

- A. Social Security is much better than others
- B. Social Security is somewhat better than others
- C. Social Security is about as good as others
- D. Social Security is somewhat worse than others
- E. Social Security is much worse than others
- F. Can't say, have had no contact with other government agencies

REMARKS

Question Number

Remarks

Three horizontal number lines are provided for recording answers. Each line has 11 tick marks, creating 10 equal intervals. The lines are empty, with no numbers or labels.

Question Number

Remarks

Question Number

Remarks

Question Number

Remarks

Question Number

Remarks

Question Number

Remarks

Three horizontal number lines are provided for graphing. Each line has 11 tick marks, but no numerical labels are present.

REMARKS

Question Number

Remarks

Question Number

Remarks

Question Number

Remarks

Question Number

Remarks

Three horizontal number lines are provided for recording answers. Each line has 21 tick marks, creating 20 equal intervals. The lines are empty, intended for the student to write their answers to the problems.

Question Number

Remarks

Question Number

Remarks

SERVICE DELIVERY QUESTIONNAIRE

SSI REDETERMINATIONS

SSN	_____	LAST NAME	_____	REGION	_____
STUDY NUMBER	_____	FO CODE	_____	EXCLUSION	_____
RESPONDENT	_____				
INTERVIEW DATE	_____	INTERVIEW METHOD	_____	INTERVIEW BEGAN	_____
				INTERVIEW ENDED	_____

METHOD OF COMPLETING FORM

1. How did you complete your redetermination form?

(Circle only one response.)

- A. In the Social Security office/contact station (Go to 2)
- B. By telephone (Go to 2)
- C. With a Social Security representative who visited you (Go to 2)
- D. By mail (Go to 1a)
- X. Does not remember (Go to 6)

(Note: Use code D only if the respondent filled out the redetermination form without SSA help and mailed it in. This code may apply for FO initiated or DOC transfer cases. Record any subsequent FO contacts (e.g., for clarification of answers on the form) as recontacts in question 10.)

1a. How easy or hard was it to fill out the form?

(Read the Rating Scale.)

- A. Very easy (Go to 6)
- B. Easy (Go to 6)
- C. Not easy or hard (Go to 6)
- D. Hard (Go to 1b)
- E. Very hard (Go to 1b)
- X. Does not remember (Go to 6)

1b. What was hard about completing the form?

(Circle up to five responses.)

- A. Difficulty understanding questions
- B. Difficulty obtaining necessary information (e.g., bank balance)
- C. Difficulty recalling information (e.g., date of move)
- D. Non-English speaking
- E. Form too long
- F. Format too complicated
- Z. Other (Specify in Remarks)

(Go to 6)

APPOINTMENTS

2. Did Social Security schedule an appointment with you to complete your redetermination form?

- Y. Yes (Go to 2a)
- N. No (Go to 3)
- X. Does not remember (Go to 3)

2a. Was your appointment kept on the scheduled day and time?

- Y. Yes (Go to 4)
- N. No (Go to 2a1)
- X. Does not remember (Go to 4)

2a1. What happened?

(Circle only one response.)

- A. You decided to come in before the scheduled day
- B. SSA contacted you before the scheduled day
- C. You postponed to another day
- D. SSA postponed to another day
- E. SSA was ____ hours ____ minutes late for the interview
- F. You were ____ hours ____ minutes late for the interview

Note: If the respondent does not remember how late the interview was, enter 9 for hours and 99 for minutes.

(Go to 4)

WAITING TIME

3. On the day you came to talk to Social Security about your redetermination, from the time you walked into the office, about how long did you wait to see the person who helped you with the form?

____ hours ____ minutes

3a. How long was your wait compared to what you expected?

(Read the Rating Scale)

- A. Much shorter than expected
- B. Shorter than expected
- C. About as expected
- D. Longer than expected
- E. Much longer than expected

(Go to 3b)

3b. How long did you expect to wait?

____ hours ____ minutes

(Go to 3c)

Ask the respondent to fill in the blank in the statement below (3c).

3c. Good service would mean waiting no longer than ____ hours ____ minutes to see the interviewer.

Note: If the respondent has no opinion or does not remember, enter 9 for hours and 99 for minutes.

(Go to 4)

CLARITY OF INTERVIEWER'S EXPLANATIONS

4. How clearly did the interviewer explain what would happen after your redetermination, for example, whether your payment could change?

(Read the Rating Scale)

- A. Clearly
- B. Somewhat clearly
- C. Not clearly
- D. Did not explain
- X. Does not remember

(Go to 5)

REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES

5. How clearly did the interviewer explain what changes you need to report to Social Security, for example, if you go to work or your earnings change?

(Read the Rating Scale)

- A. Clearly
- B. Somewhat clearly
- C. Not clearly
- D. Did not explain
- E. Does not remember

(Go to 6)

6. Were you provided with a copy of written instructions on reporting changes to Social Security?

- Y. Yes
- N. No
- X. Does not remember

(Go to 7)

LANGUAGE ISSUES

7. Do you usually speak a language other than English?

- Y. Yes (Go to 7a)
- N. No (Go to 8)

- 7a. What language do you usually speak?

(Circle only one response.)

- A. Spanish
- B. Russian
- C. Vietnamese
- D. Korean
- E. Chinese
- F. Tagalog (Filipino)
- G. Arabic/Middle Eastern languages
- H. Italian

- I. Cambodian
- J. Polish
- K. Hindi/Indian languages
- L. Laotian/Thai
- M. Hmong
- N. French/Creole/Haitian
- O. Greek
- Z. Other (Specify in Remarks)

(Go to 7b)

7b. Do you read [that language]?

- Y. Yes
N. No

(Go to 7c)

Complete item 7c and related subitems if an interview took place in connection with the redetermination. If the redetermination was completed exclusively by mail, go to item 7d.

7c. Were you able to get along in English by yourself during your interview with Social Security?

- Y. Yes (Go to 7c1)
N. No (Go to 7c3)

7c1. Even though you were able to get along in English, did you feel you had any special problems because of language?

- Y. Yes (Go to 7c2)
N. No (Go to 8)
X. Does not remember (Go to 8)

7c2. What were they?

(Record in Remarks)

(Go to 8)

7c3. Did you have your own interpreter with you to help with your interview?

- A. Yes—Brought own interpreter (Go to 7c4)
B. No—SSA provided interpreter (Go to 8)
C. No—SSA employee spoke the language (Go to 8)
X. Does not remember (Go to 8)

7c4. Who was your interpreter?

(Circle only one response.)

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| A. Relative/friend over age 16 | E. Professional interpreter |
| B. Relative/friend under age 16 | F. Advocacy group |
| C. Social services agency | X. Does not remember |
| D. Church/religious organization | Z. Other (Specify in Remarks) |

(Go to 8)

Complete item 7d with non-English speaking respondents for mail redeterminations only.

7d. Did you need help from someone not employed by Social Security to fill out the redetermination form because of problems with English?

- Y. Yes (Go to 7d1)
N. No (Go to 8)
X. Does not remember (Go to 8)

7d1. Who helped?

(Circle only one response.)

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| A. Relative/friend over age 16 | E. Professional interpreter |
| B. Relative/friend under age 16 | F. Advocacy group |
| C. Social service agency | X. Does not remember |
| D. Church/religious organization | Z. Other (Specify in Remarks) |

(Go to 8)

8. Are you hearing impaired?

Y. Yes (Go to 8a)

N. No (Go to 9)

8a. How was your interview conducted?

(Circle only one response.)

- A. You got along by yourself—read lips, wrote notes
- B. You brought your own signer
- C. SSA employee signed
- D. SSA provided non-employee signer
- E. Used TDD—text telephone (e.g., with Relay Service)
- F. No interview—mail redetermination
- X. Does not remember
- Z. Other (Specify in Remarks)

(Go to 9)

HELP REQUIRED—NON-SSA ASSISTANCE

9. Did you need help from someone not employed by Social Security to complete your redetermination for any reason other than language [or hearing impairment]?

Y. Yes (Go to 9a)

N. No (Go to 10)

X. Does not remember (Go to 10)

9a. Who helped you?

(Circle up to five responses.)

- A. Senior citizens organization
- B. Relatives/friends
- C. Attorney
- D. Advocacy group
- E. Social services agency

- F. Health care provider
- G. Employer/union
- H. School
- I. Church
- X. Does not remember
- Z. Other (Specify in Remarks)

(Go to 9b)

9b. Why did you need help?

(Do not read responses. Circle up to five responses.)

- A. Physical limitations (e.g., blindness)
- B. Communication problems (e.g., speech impediment)
- C. Educational limitations
- D. Transportation problems

- E. Personal preference
- F. SSA policies confusing, hard to understand
- Z. Other (Specify in Remarks)

(Go to 10)

RECONTACTS

10. After the day of your interview (or after the form was sent in, if completed by mail), did you have another telephone or in-person contact with Social Security about your redetermination? (For example, did they ask you for additional information or did you have questions?)

Y. Yes (Go to 10a)

N. No (Go to 11)

X. Does not remember (Go to 11)

Note: Do not consider documents or forms submitted by mail as a result of the redetermination interview as a recontact; e.g., telephone redeterminations that were returned by mail.

- 10a. How many more times were you in touch with Social Security after the day of your interview?

Note: Show 1 recontact if the respondent knows he had another contact but does not remember how many.

(Go to 10b)

- 10b. For each recontact, ask the following three questions and enter the responses in the corresponding column using the codes under the column. (Up to five reason codes may be shown for a recontact, only one initiation and one completion code should be recorded per recontact.)

	What was the reason?	Did you contact Social Security or did they contact you?	How did you complete the contact?
Recontact 1	a. _____	b. _____	c. _____
Recontact 2	a. _____	b. _____	c. _____
Recontact 3	a. _____	b. _____	c. _____
Recontact 4	a. _____	b. _____	c. _____
Recontact 5	a. _____	b. _____	c. _____

Reason Codes

- A. Submitted redetermination completed by telephone (or at previous visit)
- B. Submitted non-medical evidence
- C. Needed further information
- D. Reported change in circumstances
- E. Requested status
- F. Filed appeal
- X. Does not remember
- Z. Other (Specify in Remarks)

Initiation Codes

- A. SSA telephoned you
- B. SSA wrote you
- C. SSA visited you
- D. You contacted SSA
- X. Does not remember

Completion Codes

- A. Telephone
- B. Visit
- C. Mail
- X. Does not remember

Note: Completion code must be 'B' (Visit) when reason code 'A' (submitted redetermination) applies.

(Go to 11)

REDETERMINATION PROCESS

11. Was there anything about your experience in your redetermination review that confused you?

- Y. Yes (Go to 11a)
- N. No (Go to 12)
- X. Does not remember (Go to 12)

11a. What was confusing?

(Record in Remarks)

(Go to 12)

PREFERENCE FOR FUTURE BUSINESS

12. If you had business to conduct with Social Security in the future, such as reporting a change of address, would you prefer to telephone the 800 number, telephone the local office, visit the office, or contact Social Security some other way?

(Do not read responses. Circle only one response.)

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| A. Visit office (Go to 13) | E. Write (Go to 15) |
| B. Telephone local office (Go to 14) | F. Depends on reason for contact (Go to 15) |
| C. Telephone 800 number (Go to 15) | Z. Other (Specify in Remarks) (Go to 15) |
| D. Third party contact (Go to 15) | |

PREFERS VISITING FO

13. Why would you prefer to conduct your business by visiting the office?

(Do not read responses. Circle up to five responses.)

- | | |
|---|--|
| A. Faster service | G. Don't want to mail documents |
| B. More accurate service | H. Want receipt for transaction |
| C. Prefer face-to-face | I. Easier to understand SSA policies (complex transaction) |
| D. Language barrier | J. Can't get through on telephone |
| E. Communication problem (e.g., deafness) | Z. Other (Specify in Remarks) |
| F. No telephone | |

(Go to 15)

PREFERS CALLING FO

14. Why do you prefer to telephone the local office rather than the 800 number?

(Do not read responses. Circle up to five responses.)

- | | |
|---|---|
| A. Faster service | F. Hard to understand 800 number employees because of regional dialect/accent |
| B. More accurate processing of actions | G. Can't get through on 800 number (busy signals) |
| C. Know the employees at the local office | H. Kept on hold on the 800 number |
| D. Local office has the papers on the case | I. Did not know there was an 800 number |
| E. Local office more knowledgeable about SSA policies | Z. Other (Specify in Remarks) |

(Go to 15)

UNDERSTANDING NOTICES

15. Generally, how easy or hard have the letters you received from Social Security about your benefits been to understand?

(Read the Rating Scale)

- | | |
|---|---|
| A. Very easy to understand (Go to 18) | D. Hard to understand (Go to 16) |
| B. Easy to understand (Go to 18) | E. Very hard to understand (Go to 16) |
| C. Neither easy nor hard to understand (Go to 18) | F. Did not read letters (Go to 18) |
| | X. Does not remember receiving letters (Go to 18) |

In addition to asking questions 16 and 17, ask the person the title of the notice(s) he had trouble with and record it in Remarks as well as any pertinent comments.

16. What made the letter(s) hard to understand?

(Do not read responses. Circle up to five responses.)

- | | |
|---|--|
| A. Subject is hard to understand | E. Print size or quality |
| B. Words are too difficult to understand | F. Format |
| C. Not clearly written; points not clearly made | G. Written in English; prefer foreign language |
| D. Too lengthy | H. Handwritten; at least partly illegible |
| | Z. Other (Specify in Remarks) |

(Go to 17)

17. Did you contact Social Security or ask someone else to help you understand the letter(s)?

- A. No (Go to 18)
B. Contacted Social Security (Go to 18)
C. Contacted someone else (Go to 17a)
X. Does not remember (Go to 18)

Note: If applicable, both codes B and C may be circled.

17a. Who?

(Circle up to five responses.)

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| A. Senior citizens organization | F. Health care provider |
| B. Relatives/friends | G. Employer/union |
| C. Attorney | H. School |
| D. Advocacy group | I. Church |
| E. Social services agency | X. Does not remember |
| | Z. Other (Specify in Remarks) |

DIRECT DEPOSIT

Ask questions 18 - 21 only if the beneficiary does not have direct deposit. Otherwise, go to question 22.

18. Why do you receive a paper check instead of having your benefits directly deposited to a bank account?

(Do not read responses. Circle up to five responses.)

- | | |
|---|---|
| A. No bank account | F. Might cause problems getting benefits paid |
| B. Prefer paper checks | G. Unaware - direct deposit never offered |
| C. Wanted to see first check; never changed to direct deposit | X. Does not remember |
| D. Safer to get paper check | Z. Other (Specify in Remarks) |
| E. Confused about how direct deposit works | |

Ask question 18a if the answer to question 18 includes "prefer paper checks."

18a. Why do you prefer paper checks? (Record in Remarks)

Complete question 18b if the answer to question 18 is other than "no bank account." Otherwise, go to 19.

18b. Do you have a bank account?

Y. Yes
N. No

(Go to 19)

19. Do you usually pay a fee for cashing your check?

Y. Yes (Go to 19a)
N. No (Go to 20)

19a. How much do you usually pay?

\$ _ . _ _

Note: Enter money amounts in dollar and cents format (\$\$.cc); if the respondent does not remember, enter \$99.99.

(Go to 20)

20. Were the advantages of direct deposit ever explained to you?

Y. Yes
N. No
X. Does not remember

(Go to 21)

21. Are you interested in changing to direct deposit?

Y. Yes
N. No
U. Undecided

(Go to 22)

OVERALL RATING

22. Overall, how would you rate the service that Social Security has given you?

(Read the Rating Scale)

A. Very Good
B. Good
C. Fair
D. Poor
E. Very Poor

(Go to 23)

RATING ASPECTS OF SERVICE

23. Now I would like you to rate Social Security's performance in several specific areas of service using the following scales:

- A. Very good
- B. Good
- C. Fair
- D. Poor
- E. Very poor
- F. No opinion/not applicable
- X. Does not remember

Note: Rotate the order in which the following items are read.

23a. The amount of time you had to wait to be served in the office.

- A. B. C. D. E. F. X.

If the rating was fair, poor or very poor (C, D, or E), ask question 23a1.

23a1. Why did you rate waiting time as _____ (fill in response)?

(Record in Remarks)

23b. The courtesy of the Social Security employees you dealt with.

- A. B. C. D. E. F. X.

If the rating was fair, poor or very poor (C, D, or E), ask question 23b1.

23b1. Why did you rate the courtesy of the employees as _____ (fill in response)?

(Record in Remarks)

23c. How knowledgeable the Social Security employees were (i.e., their expertise).

- A. B. C. D. E. F. X.

If the rating was fair, poor or very poor (C, D, or E), ask question 23c1.

23c1. Why did you rate the knowledge of the employees as _____ (fill in response)?

(Record in Remarks)

23d. The amount of assistance the Social Security employees gave you (i.e., how helpful they were).

- A. B. C. D. E. F. X.

If the rating was fair, poor or very poor (C, D, or E), ask question 23d1.

23d1. Why did you rate the assistance provided by the employees as _____ (fill in response)?

(Record in Remarks)

23e. The overall amount of time it took Social Security to take action on changes you reported (such as a change of address)?

- A. B. C. D. E. F. X.

If the rating was fair, poor or very poor (C, D, or E), ask question 23e1.

23e1. Why did you rate the time it took Social Security to process your claim as _____ (fill in response)?

(Record in Remarks)

23f. The convenience (e.g., the availability of parking and/or public transportation) of the Social Security office location that you visited (or that handled your claim, if filed by telephone).

A. B. C. D. E. F. X.

If the rating was fair, poor or very poor (C, D, or E), ask question 23f1.

23f1. Why did you rate the Social Security office location as _____ (fill in response)?

(Record in Remarks)

23g. The hours that the Social Security office was open:

A. B. C. D. E. F. X.

If the rating was fair, poor or very poor (C, D, or E), ask question 23g1.

23g1. Why did you rate Social Security's office hours as _____ (fill in response)?

(Record in Remarks)

23h. The Social Security office itself (e.g., the physical appearance, privacy, etc.)

A. B. C. D. E. F. X.

If the rating was fair, poor or very poor (C, D, or E), ask question 23h1.

23h1. Why did you rate the appearance of the Social Security office as _____ (fill in response)?

(Record in Remarks)

(Go to 24)

RANKING ASPECTS OF SERVICE

24. Some of these aspects of Social Security's service may be more important to you than others. I would like you to tell me the two aspects of service that are the most important to you, and the two that are least important.

Read the entire list of aspects of service to the respondent. (Rotate the order in which the items are read.) Enter the alpha code corresponding to the two aspects of service the respondent considers most important in items 24a and 24b below, and the codes for the two least important in 24c and 24d.

- A. The amount of time you have to wait to be served in the office.
- B. The courtesy of Social Security employees.
- C. The job knowledge of Social Security employees.
- D. The assistance Social Security employees provide (how helpful they are).
- E. The overall amount of time it takes Social Security to take action on changes you report.
- F. The convenience of the Social Security office location.
- G. The hours that the Social Security office is open.
- H. The Social Security office itself (e.g., the physical appearance, privacy, etc.).

24a. _____ **24b.** _____

24c. _____ **24d.** _____

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27. How would you rate Social Security's service compared to the service you get from other Federal, State, and local government agencies?

(Read the Rating Scale)

- A. Social Security is much better than others
- B. Social Security is somewhat better than others
- C. Social Security is about as good as others
- D. Social Security is somewhat worse than others
- E. Social Security is much worse than others
- F. Can't say, have had no contact with other government agencies

REMARKS

Question Number

Remarks

Question Number

Remarks

Question Number

Remarks

Question Number

Remarks

Question Number

☐ **Agreement** ☐ **Disagreement** ☐ **Unsure** ☐ **Don't know** ☐ **Refuse to answer**

Remarks

Question Number

Remarks

REMARKS

Question Number

Remarks

Question Number

Remarks

DATE	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	BALANCE
1960-1-1
1960-1-2
1960-1-3
1960-1-4
1960-1-5
1960-1-6
1960-1-7
1960-1-8
1960-1-9
1960-1-10
1960-1-11
1960-1-12
1960-1-13
1960-1-14
1960-1-15
1960-1-16
1960-1-17
1960-1-18
1960-1-19
1960-1-20
1960-1-21
1960-1-22
1960-1-23
1960-1-24
1960-1-25
1960-1-26
1960-1-27
1960-1-28
1960-1-29
1960-1-30
1960-1-31
1960-2-1
1960-2-2
1960-2-3
1960-2-4
1960-2-5
1960-2-6
1960-2-7
1960-2-8
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Three horizontal number lines are provided for graphing. Each line has 11 tick marks, but no numerical labels are present.

Question Number

Remarks

XXXXXXXXXXXX **XXXXXXXXXX** **XXXXXXXXXXXX** **XXXXXXXXXX** **XXXXXXXXXXXX**

Three horizontal number lines are provided for recording answers. Each line has 21 tick marks, creating 20 equal intervals. The lines are empty, intended for the student to write their answers to the problems.

Question Number

Remarks

Three horizontal number lines are provided for recording data. Each line has 11 tick marks, but no numerical values are assigned to them.

Question Number

Remarks

Question Number

Remarks

XXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXX

Three horizontal number lines are provided for graphing. Each line has 21 tick marks, but no numerical labels are present.

SERVICE DELIVERY QUESTIONNAIRE ENUMERATION

SSN	_____	LAST NAME	_____	REGION	_____
STUDY NUMBER	_____	FO CODE	_____	EXCLUSION	_____
RESPONDENT	_____				
INTERVIEW DATE	_____	INTERVIEW METHOD	<u>T</u>	INTERVIEW BEGAN	____:____:____
				INTERVIEW ENDED	____:____:____

INITIAL CONTACT

1. How did you first make contact with Social Security about applying for [correcting] your [your child's] Social Security card?

(Circle only one response.)

- | | |
|---|---|
| A. Called SSA's 800 telephone number (Go to 1a) | F. Had someone else, such as a relative or friend, make the contact (Go to 2) |
| B. Called your local SSA office (Go to 1a) | G. Wrote to SSA (Go to 2) |
| C. Visited the SSA office/contact station—spoke to representative (Go to 1a) | X. Does not remember (Go to 2) |
| D. Visited the SSA office/contact station—picked up blank form (Go to 2) | Z. Other (Specify in Remarks) (Go to 2) |
| E. Met with SSA representative at community center, hospital, or other public location (Go to 1a) | |

CLARITY OF EXPLANATIONS

- 1a. How clearly did the representative explain what you needed to do to apply for the card, such as how to fill out the form and what documents to submit?

(Read the Rating Scale)

- A. Clearly
B. Somewhat clearly
C. Not clearly
D. Did not explain
E. Does not remember

(Go to 1b)

- 1b. Did the representative tell you about how long it would take to get your Social Security card?

- Y. Yes (Go to 1b1)
N. No (Go to 2)
X. Does not remember (Go to 2)

1b1. Was the actual length of time shorter, longer, or just about what the representative estimated?

- A. Shorter
- B. Longer
- C. Just about as estimated
- D. Does not remember

(Go to 2)

NEXT CONTACT

2. Did you then contact Social Security in person or by mail?

(Circle only one response.)

- A. No subsequent contact (Completed in person at initial contact) (Go to 3)
- B. In person (Go to 3)
- C. Mail (Go to 4)
- X. Does not remember (Go to 4)
- Z. Other (Specify in Remarks) (Go to 4)

WAITING TIME

3. On the day you applied for your card, from the time you walked into the office, about how long did you wait to see the person who reviewed your application form?

___ hours ___ minutes

(Go to 3a)

3a. How long was your wait compared to what you expected?

(Read the Rating Scale)

- A. Much shorter than expected
- B. Shorter than expected
- C. About as expected
- D. Longer than expected
- E. Much longer than expected

(Go to 3b)

3b. How long did you expect to wait?

___ hours ___ minutes

(Go to 3c)

Ask the respondent to fill in the blank in the statement below (3c).

3c. Good service would mean waiting no longer than ___ hours ___ minutes to see the interviewer.

(Go to 4)

Note: If the respondent has no opinion or does not remember, enter 9 for hours and 99 minutes.

RECONTACTS

4. Did you have any further contacts with Social Security before you received your card?

- Y. Yes (Go to 4a)
- N. No (Go to 5)
- X. Does not remember (Go to 5)

4a. What was the reason for your recontact?

(Do not read responses. Circle up to five responses.)

- A. Resubmitted completed application form and/or documents
- B. Social Security had further questions
- C. You had further questions
- D. Requested status of Social Security card
- X. Does not remember
- Z. Other (Specify in Remarks)

(Go to 5)

LANGUAGE ISSUES

5. Do you usually speak a language other than English?

- Y. Yes (Go to 5a)
- N. No (Go to 6)

5a. What language do you usually speak?

(Circle only one response.)

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| A. Spanish | I. Cambodian |
| B. Russian | J. Polish |
| C. Vietnamese | K. Hindi/Indian languages |
| D. Korean | L. Laotian/Thai |
| E. Chinese | M. Hmong |
| F. Tagalog (Filipino) | N. French/Creole/Haitian |
| G. Arabic/Middle Eastern languages | O. Greek |
| H. Italian | Z. Other (Specify in Remarks) |

(Go to 5b)

5b. Do you read [that language]?

- Y. Yes
- N. No

Complete item 5c and related subitems if an interview took place in connection with the SSN application. If the application was completed by mail, go to item 5d.

5c. Were you able to get along in English by yourself during your interview with Social Security?

- Y. Yes (Go to 5c1)
- N. No (Go to 5c3)

5c1. Even though you were able to get along in English, did you feel you had any special problems because of language?

- Y. Yes (Go to 5c2)
- N. No (Go to 6)
- X. Does not remember (Go to 6)

5c2. What were they?

(Record in Remarks)

(Go to 6)

5c3. Did you have your own interpreter with you to help with your interview?

(Circle only one response.)

- A. Yes—Brought own interpreter (Go to 5c4)
- B. No—SSA provided interpreter (Go to 6)
- C. No—SSA employee spoke the language (Go to 6)
- X. Does not remember (Go to 6)

5c4. Who was your interpreter?

(Circle only one response.)

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| A. Relative/friend over age 16 | E. Professional interpreter |
| B. Relative/friend under age 16 | F. Advocacy group |
| C. Social services agency | X. Does not remember |
| D. Church/religious organization | Z. Other (Specify in Remarks) |

(Go to 6)

Complete item 5d with non-English speaking respondents for mail applications only.

5d. Did you need help from someone not employed by Social Security to fill out the Social Security card application form because of problems with English?

- Y. Yes (Go to 5d1)
- N. No (Go to 6)
- X. Does not remember (Go to 6)

5d1. Who helped?

(Circle only one response.)

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| A. Relative/friend over age 16 | E. Professional interpreter |
| B. Relative/friend under age 16 | F. Advocacy group |
| C. Social service agency | X. Does not remember |
| D. Church/religious organization | Z. Other (Specify in Remarks) |

(Go to 6)

6. Are you hearing impaired?

- Y. Yes (Go to 6a)
- N. No (Go to 7)

6a. How was your interview conducted?

(Circle only one response.)

- A. You got along by yourself—read lips, wrote notes
- B. You brought your own signer
- C. SSA employee signed
- D. SSA provided non-employee signer
- E. No interview—applied by mail
- X. Does not remember
- Z. Other (Specify in Remarks)

(Go to 7)

HELP REQUIRED—NON-SSA ASSISTANCE

7. Did you need help from someone not employed by Social Security to apply for a Social Security card for any reason other than language [or hearing impairment]?

- Y. Yes (Go to 7a)
- N. No (Go to 8)
- X. Does not remember (Go to 8)

7a. Who helped you?

(Circle up to five responses.)

- A. Senior citizens organization
- B. Relatives/friends
- C. Attorney
- D. Advocacy group
- E. Social services agency
- F. Health care provider

- G. Employer/union
- H. School
- I. Church
- X. Does not remember
- Z. Other (Specify in Remarks)

(Go to 7b)

7b. Why did you need help?

(Do not read responses. Circle up to five responses.)

- A. Physical limitations (e.g., blindness)
- B. Communication problems (e.g., speech impediment)
- C. Educational limitations
- D. Transportation problems

- E. Personal preference
- F. SSA policies confusing, hard to understand
- Z. Other (Specify in Remarks)

(Go to 8)

SOCIAL SECURITY CARD APPLICATION PROCESS

8. Was there anything about your experience applying for a Social Security card that confused you?

- Y. Yes (Go to 8a)
- N. No (Go to 9)
- X. Does not remember (Go to 9)

8a. What was confusing?

(Record in Remarks)

(Go to 9)

PREFERENCE FOR FUTURE BUSINESS

9. If you ever contact Social Security again in the future, for example to request a statement of your earnings, would you prefer to telephone the 800 number, telephone the local office, visit the office, or contact Social Security some other way?

(Do not read responses. Circle only one response.)

- A. Visit office (Go to 10)
- B. Telephone local office (Go to 11)
- C. Telephone 800 number (Go to 12)
- D. Third party contact (Go to 12)

- E. Write (Go to 12)
- F. Depends on reason for contact (Go to 12)
- Z. Other (Specify in Remarks) (Go to 12)

PREFERS VISITING FO

10. Why would you prefer to conduct your business by visiting the office?

(Do not read responses. Circle up to five responses.)

- | | |
|---|--|
| A. Faster service | G. Don't want to mail documents |
| B. More accurate service | H. Want receipt for transaction |
| C. Prefer face-to-face | I. Easier to understand SSA policies (complex transaction) |
| D. Language barrier | J. Can't get through on telephone |
| E. Communication problem (e.g., deafness) | Z. Other (Specify in Remarks) |
| F. No telephone | |

(Go to 12)

PREFERS CALLING FO

11. Why do you prefer to telephone the local office rather than the 800 number?

(Do not read responses. Circle up to five responses.)

- | | |
|---|--|
| A. Faster service | F. Hard to understand 800 number employees because of regional dialect/accents |
| B. More accurate processing of actions | G. Can't get through on 800 number (busy signals) |
| C. Know the employees at the local office | H. Kept on hold on the 800 number |
| D. Local office has the papers on the case | I. Did not know there was an 800 number |
| E. Local office more knowledgeable about SSA policies | Z. Other (Specify in Remarks) |

(Go to 12)

OVERALL RATING

12. Overall, how would you rate the service that Social Security has given you?

(Read the Rating Scale)

- A. Very Good
- B. Good
- C. Fair
- D. Poor
- E. Very Poor

(Go to 13)

RATING ASPECTS OF SERVICE

13. Now I would like you to rate Social Security's performance in several specific areas of service using the following scales:

- A. Very good
- B. Good
- C. Fair
- D. Poor
- E. Very poor
- F. No opinion/not applicable
- X. Does not remember

Note: Rotate the order in which the following items are read.

13a. The amount of time you had to wait to be served in the office.

A. B. C. D. E. F. X.

If the rating was fair, poor or very poor (C, D, or E), ask question 13a1.

13a1. Why did you rate waiting time as _____ (fill in response)?

(Record in Remarks)

13b. The courtesy of the Social Security employees you dealt with.

A. B. C. D. E. F. X.

If the rating was fair, poor or very poor (C, D, or E), ask question 13b1.

13b1. Why did you rate the courtesy of the employees as _____ (fill in response)?

(Record in Remarks)

13c. How knowledgeable the Social Security employees were (i.e., their expertise).

A. B. C. D. E. F. X.

If the rating was fair, poor or very poor (C, D, or E), ask question 13c1.

13c1. Why did you rate the knowledge of the employees as _____ (fill in response)?

(Record in Remarks)

13d. The amount of assistance the Social Security employees gave you (i.e., how helpful they were).

A. B. C. D. E. F. X.

If the rating was fair, poor or very poor (C, D, or E), ask question 13d1.

13d1. Why did you rate the assistance provided by the employees as _____ (fill in response)?

(Record in Remarks)

13e. The overall amount of time it took Social Security to process your Social Security card application.

A. B. C. D. E. F. X.

If the rating was fair, poor or very poor (C, D, or E), ask question 13e1.

13e1. Why did you rate the time it took Social Security to process your application _____ (fill in response)?

(Record in Remarks)

13f. The convenience (e.g., the availability of parking and/or public transportation) of the Social Security office location that you visited (or that handled your application, if filed by mail).

A. B. C. D. E. F. X.

If the rating was fair, poor or very poor (C, D, or E), ask question 13f1.

13f1. Why did you rate the Social Security office location as _____ (fill in response)?

(Record in Remarks)

13g. The hours that the Social Security office was open.

A. B. C. D. E. F. X.

If the rating was fair, poor or very poor (C, D, or E), ask question 13g1.

13g1. Why did you rate Social Security's office hours as _____ (fill in response)?

(Record in Remarks)

13h. The Social Security office itself (e.g., the physical appearance, privacy, etc.)

A. B. C. D. E. F. X.

If the rating was fair, poor or very poor (C, D, or E), ask question 13h1.

13h1. Why did you rate the appearance of the Social Security office as _____ (fill in response)?

(Record in Remarks)

(Go to 14)

RANKING ASPECTS OF SERVICE

14. Some of these aspects of Social Security's service may be more important to you than others. I would like you to tell me the two aspects of service that are the most important to you, and the two that are least important.

Read the entire list of aspects of service to the respondent. (Rotate the order in which the items are read.) Enter the alpha code corresponding to the two aspects of service the respondent considers most important in items 14a and 14b below, and the codes for the two least important in 14c and 14d.

- A. The amount of time you have to wait to be served in the office.
- B. The courtesy of Social Security employees.
- C. The job knowledge of Social Security employees.
- D. The assistance Social Security employees provide (how helpful they are).
- E. The overall amount of time it takes Social Security to process the Social Security card application.
- F. The convenience of the Social Security office location.
- G. The hours that the Social Security office is open.
- H. The Social Security office itself (e.g., the physical appearance, privacy, etc.).

MOST IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF SERVICE

14a. _____ **14b.** _____

LEAST IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF SERVICE

14c. _____ **14d.** _____

(Go to 15)

15. Are there any other aspects of our service that are important to you?

Y. Yes (Specify in Remarks)

N. No

(Go to 16)

SUGGESTIONS

16. Do you have any suggestions about how Social Security could improve its service?

Y. Yes (Go to 16a)

N. No (Go to 17)

16a. What suggestions do you have? (Record comments below.)

16b. (For the above comment(s), circle the pertinent alpha code(s) to indicate the subject area(s) upon which 1 respondent commented. Up to five codes may be circled.)

Subject

- A. Telephone service (availability/accessibility)
- B. FO facilities (location, physical appearance, etc.)
- C. Appointments/waiting time
- D. Employee attitude/expertise/assistance
- E. Information provided
- F. Application process (e.g. accuracy, processing time, decision)
- G. Program policy
- H. Special services (e.g. non-English speaking, hearing impaired, etc.)
- Z. Other (Specify)

(Go to 17)

17. How would you rate Social Security's service compared to the service you get from other Federal, State, and local government agencies?

(Read the Rating Scale)

- A. Social Security is much better than others
- B. Social Security is somewhat better than others
- C. Social Security is about as good as others
- D. Social Security is somewhat worse than others
- E. Social Security is much worse than others
- F. Can't say, have had no contact with other government agencies

REMARKS

Question Number

Remarks

Question Number

Remarks

Question Number

Remarks

Question Number

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Question Number

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REMARKS

Question Number

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Question Number

Remarks

Income Security Programs (ISP) Health and Welfare Canada Survey on Quality

The ISP Branch of Health and Welfare Canada periodically conducts surveys of its beneficiaries to evaluate the quality of the service which it provides. These surveys have as their objective to obtain:

- Information on the opinions of beneficiaries of the Old-Age Security (OAS) Program and the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) regarding the quality of service currently being provided.
- Data which will permit the assessment of various options for improving program effectiveness.

Methodology

For illustrative purposes this discussion focuses on the 1989 survey with comparisons to surveys carried out in earlier years.

The 1989 Survey Sample:

A survey sample was drawn from all recipients receiving OAS, the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS), the Spouse's Allowance (SPA) and the CPP Flexible Retirement, Disability and Survivors benefits. The regions covered include: Atlantic, Quebec (except for the CPP), Ontario and Western. The survey was conducted by mail and questionnaires were sent to a random sample of 8,075 OAS and CPP benefit recipients. The sample was further broken down by region and type of benefit.

Of the 8,075 questionnaires mailed out, 6,216 were returned. After data editing, 6,187 returns were used in the analysis giving the survey a 76.6-percent response rate.

The OAS Masterfile and the CPP Master Benefit Records were used as the sampling frame. They contain the names and addresses of all the current OAS and CPP beneficiaries. These masterfiles are used for the monthly check issue and are regularly updated. Stratification was done by region and by benefit type.

Data Processing:

Questionnaire responses were directly entered on computer using the computer software package dBase III Plus, with specially written programs allowing only valid codes to be entered. Data was then edited using the statistical package SPSS/PC to ensure consistency. Data entry errors and respondents' errors were double-checked and corrected.

Other Steps:

Attempts were made to maximize the response rates. Two weeks before the survey, an advance letter was sent to all participants selected for the survey in order to inform them that they would be receiving a questionnaire in 2 weeks.

During the same period, regional directors and client service centers were advised about the upcoming survey and supplied with the same letters and questionnaires for the purpose of helping respondents with possible questions.

Two weeks after mailing the questionnaire, a followup letter was sent to remind the participants to complete and return their questionnaire, if they had not already done so.

1989 Quality of Service Survey Compared to 1976, 1984 and 1986 Surveys

Three similar Quality of Service Surveys were carried out in 1976, 1984 and 1986. The 1976 survey was targeted at OAS/GIS and SPA recipients and did not include CPP recipients. The 1984 survey included the OAS, GIS, SPA, CPP Disability and CPP Survivor's beneficiaries for Ontario and British Columbia only. While the 1986 survey covered all the same programs as the 1984 survey, it dealt with all provinces and territories. The 1989 survey also included the OAS, GIS, SPA, CPP Disability and CPP Survivor's, in addition to CPP Flexible Retirement beneficiaries for all provinces and territories. However, there were no CPP beneficiaries in Quebec in the sample.

The 1976, 1984 and 1989 surveys covered all relevant program beneficiaries, while the 1986 survey covered only new beneficiaries. Some of the questions were repeated from survey to survey, some were dropped and some additional questions were added. The 1984, 1986 and 1989 surveys repeated questions on contacting an ISP office, verbatim, as well as preference for direct deposit or mail delivery of benefit checks, so direct comparisons in these areas between 1976, 1984, 1986 and 1989 can be made. The 1984 survey went into more detail on the reasons for preferring direct deposit of benefit checks than did the 1976 survey. The 1986 survey, on the other hand, introduced a series of questions on application forms and check inserts which were again asked in the 1989 survey. The 1989 survey included a series of questions on the CPP Record of Earnings Statement.

Table 1 compares the results of the 1976, 1984, 1986 and 1989 surveys. It should be recalled, however, that the 1986 survey population is not exactly comparable to the survey population in the 1976, 1984 and 1989 surveys, since the 1986 survey dealt only with new beneficiaries while the other surveys dealt with the entire beneficiary population. Nevertheless, a limited comparison of the four surveys can provide some useful insights.

TABLE 1
DEMAND FOR SERVICE

<u>Percentage of Respondents Who:</u>	<u>Survey on Quality of Service</u>			
	<u>1976</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1989</u>
Actually Contacted ISP Office				
By Telephone	15.7%	29.7%	44.9%	48.0%
Found Personnel Polite	91.5%	88.0%	-	-
Received Information Needed	85.9%	85.4%	93.9%	95.7%
Actually Contacted ISP Office				
By Writing a Letter	8.9%	8.5%	11.4%	14.5%
Received Reply	78.3%	91.3%	93.8%	-
Reply Answered Questions	77.1%	79.4%	90.6%	77.7%
Actually Contacted ISP Office				
By Personal Visit	11.1%	38.0%	59.0%	55.9%
Office Easy to Locate	93.8%	95.3%	80.2%	87.7%
Found Personnel Polite	92.0%	96.7%	-	-
Served Promptly	9.8%	91.0%	83.3%	92.7%
Read OAS/CPP Booklets	75.5%	50.7%	73.6%	58.4%
Print Large Enough	84.0%	93.0%	98.3%	-
Easy to Understand	68.0%	90.4%	95.6%	-
Booklet Useful	85.3%	90.9%	94.9%	-
Prefer Direct Deposit of Check	11.0%	24.0%	29.2%	25.1%
Prefer Check Mailed to Home	86.9%	59.9%	64.5%	74.3%

Source: Quality of Service Survey 1989, ISP, Health and Welfare Canada. Unweighted figures.

Since 1976, there has been a marked increase in the proportion of clients making direct contact with the ISP offices. Between 1984 and 1986, the percentage of clients reporting visits to an ISP office increased from 38 to 59, while the percentage of clients contacting an ISP office by telephone increased from 30 to 45 during the same period. The 1989 survey indicated a drop from 59 to 56 percent of beneficiaries who had visited an ISP office and an increase from 45 to 48 percent of new beneficiaries who had telephoned an ISP office.

A notable trend was the shift in preference towards having the benefit check mailed to home or post office mailbox. Three quarters of the beneficiaries indicated a preference for mailing of benefit check, where the direct deposit stabilized at one quarter.

Analysis of Selected Questions

Services Provided by ISP:

Participants were asked a wide range of questions dealing with the use of services provided by ISP. As well, questions were asked to determine the efficiency with which services were being provided. The vast majority of persons who had contacted an ISP office were satisfied with the services they received.

Application for Benefits:

The survey participants were asked how they obtained the application form when they applied for OAS or CPP benefits. Over 38 percent of the survey respondents said their application arrived automatically in the mail. Client service centers were identified by over 33 percent of the respondents who picked up the forms, while a further 19 percent indicated that they either telephoned or wrote and asked for an application.

Although very few respondents reported any problems with the wording or size of print used on the application forms, 48.2 percent of the respondents indicated that they needed help in filling out the forms. Out of the group who needed assistance, 52 percent said they contacted an ISP office for assistance while a further 40 percent asked a relative or friend for help.

Telephone Service:

Respondents were asked whether or not they had telephoned an ISP office. Close to 48 percent indicated that they had telephoned. The vast majority of that group indicated that they telephoned to ask for information relating to the application forms. Only 3 percent telephoned to register a complaint while a further 19 percent telephoned to report a change of address.

Out of the group who telephoned an ISP office, 84.4 percent said that they either often or sometimes found the telephone lines busy. This tendency was most pronounced in Western

regions and Ontario. Respondents from Atlantic Canada were the least likely to report the telephone lines busy.

It would appear from the survey that when people encounter a busy signal when telephoning an ISP office, most kept calling until the telephone was answered. Out of the group, close to 90 percent persisted until they got through. Only a small portion visited a client service center or wrote a letter when they encountered a busy signal in attempting to contact an ISP office.

When asked how long a wait "on hold" would be reasonable, the majority (70 percent) said 5 minutes or less. About 17.1 percent said between 6 and 10 minutes would be a reasonable time to have to wait to "on hold." With respect to hours of service, the current hours of 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. was top choice overall with 69 percent. Second choice was 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. preferred by 12.9 percent of the sample.

The questionnaire also included a question on what clients would prefer to listen to if put "on hold." About 40 percent favored listening to music, 29 percent preferred recorded information messages (18 percent chose both), while only a small number of clients indicated that "silence is golden."

Client Service Centers:

When asked whether they had visited an ISP office, 55 percent of respondents said that they had. The questionnaire further on asked what means of transportation they used to go to the office. A personal car was what they most favored, with 74.7 percent of the survey participants saying they used a taxi, a bus or subway, while another 7.6 percent said they walked.

One third of respondents would prefer to visit an ISP office in the morning with 10:00 a.m. to noon being the most popular visiting time followed very closely by noon to 3:00 p.m. at 31 percent. One out of three respondents indicated that they would like to see a part-time office, if a full-time office was not available.

When asked whether they wanted to see improvements like a system of numbers to establish priority for service, the opportunity to make an appointment, or some other improvement, 36.7 percent of respondents favored an appointment system. "No improvement needed" was chosen by one-third of the clients, while the "Take-A-Number" system was the opinion of a quarter of the respondents.

Direct Deposit:

With respect to the preference in the delivery of their monthly benefit checks, 74.3 percent of the respondents chose the method of mail delivery to their home or post office mailbox. The remainder indicated they preferred a direct deposit to their bank account. Eighty-three percent

of respondents living in rural areas preferred to have their checks mailed; the percentage for respondents living in urban areas was 70 percent.

Record of Earnings Statement:

Respondents were asked if they ever received a CPP Record of Earnings Statement, and if the statement they received was correct. Since the automatic mail-out of record of earning statements is a relatively new program and sent only every 2 years, the response to the survey question was relatively low at 37.6 percent, but nonetheless, those statements received were reported accurate.

Brochures and Inserts:

Close to 65 percent of responders said that they had read an ISP brochure or pamphlet, which they found useful and easy to understand. Check inserts proved to be quite popular among respondents. Inserts dealing with OAS or CPP were more popular, followed closely by income tax issues, than any other types of inserts.

To summarize, the majority of respondents seemed to be satisfied with the types and levels of service provided by ISP. Those who either telephoned, visited or wrote to an ISP office indicated that they received the information they required. Few reported problems, with the exception of a sizable group who encountered busy telephone lines or objected to being put "on hold" for too long.

Analysis of the "Comments" of the Respondents:

Along with specific questions asked in the survey, space was provided where respondents could freely express their needs, concerns and views dealing with the quality of service. The results of the "comments" sections of the questionnaire are presented here, highlighting some of the major areas of interest or concern. It should be noted that a respondent could comment on a number of issues and each comment was recorded separately for analytical purposes.

The most frequent comment regarding the quality of service was the expression of satisfaction with personnel and service. Twenty-five percent of the comments expressed satisfaction with ISP service, a noticeable improvement from the 19 percent that indicated this in the 1986 survey. In addition to the 132 comments expressing satisfaction with the service, there were an additional 189 comments expressing appreciation for the programs administered by ISP.

There were suggestions for the improvement of service, such as the use of languages other than the two official languages, better access to buildings for the disabled, keeping longer office hours with uninterrupted appointments and more interesting check inserts and booklets. Respondents expressed the desire for medical and drug plans, pointing out that the benefits are insufficient to cover these necessary expenses. Also more discounts and social programs should be made available to them.

Respondents complained of late or lost checks and disliked a change of benefit amount without explanation. The majority of the complaints dealt with the constantly busy telephone lines and the lack of concern after being put "on hold." Angry respondents pointed out the need for higher benefits, particularly after complaining about the waste of money spent on this survey.

Conclusion

The 1989 survey on the quality of service was very useful and confirmed the trends noticed in the previous similar surveys. People use more and more our services and are more and more satisfied with the quality of our services.

The survey as such was well planned and scheduled. Over 6,000 questionnaires were returned with a response rate of 76.6 percent. The wave analysis of respondents demonstrated that nonrespondents had the same characteristics than respondents.

Survey Instrument

A facsimile of the 1989 survey instrument follows.

1989 OLD AGE SECURITY
and
CANADA PENSION PLAN
QUALITY OF SERVICE SURVEY

INSTRUCTIONS

PLEASE READ EACH QUESTION CAREFULLY BEFORE ANSWERING.

PLEASE WRITE YOUR ANSWER IN THE SPACE PROVIDED
OR CHECK ☒ THE APPROPRIATE CIRCLE.

IN THIS QUESTIONNAIRE, WE WILL REFER TO "OUR OFFICES".
BY THIS WE MEAN HEALTH AND WELFARE CANADA
CLIENT SERVICE CENTRES WHERE YOU APPLY FOR BENEFITS
OR GET INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR BENEFIT.

First, we would like to get some general information.

1. WHAT IS YOUR SEX?

☐₁ female ☐₂ male

2. WHAT IS YOUR AGE??

years

3. WHAT IS YOUR MARITAL STATUS?

☐₁ single (never married)

☐₂ married

☐₃ common-law

☐₄ widowed

☐₅ separated or divorced

4. WHICH CITY OR TOWN DO YOU LIVE IN?

5. WHICH PROVINCE OR TERRITORY DO YOU LIVE IN?

In this questionnaire we refer to a number of federal benefits.
The following is a brief description of these benefits.

OLD AGE SECURITY PENSIONS

are paid monthly to all Canadians and Landed Immigrants who are 65 years of age or older and meet the minimum residency requirements.

The GUARANTEED INCOME SUPPLEMENT

is paid to old age pensioners who have little or no income and apply annually for this benefit.

SPOUSE'S ALLOWANCE and WIDOWED SPOUSE'S ALLOWANCE

are paid to Canadians and Landed Immigrants who have little or no income, are 60 to 64 years old and are either married to a pensioner or are widowed.

The CANADA PENSION PLAN

provides retirement benefits to individuals who have contributed to the Plan. Benefits usually begin when the individual reaches 65 years of age, but may be applied for as early as 60 years of age.

In addition to retirement benefits, individuals who have contributed to the plan and become disabled may apply for a CANADA PENSION PLAN DISABILITY benefit.

Surviving spouses of individuals who have contributed to the plan may apply for CANADA PENSION PLAN SURVIVOR'S benefits.

6. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING BENEFITS DO YOU PERSONALLY RECEIVE?
Check as many as apply.

- ☐ Old Age Security Pension
- ☐ Guaranteed Income Supplement
- ☐ Spouse's Allowance
- ☐ Canada Pension Plan Retirement Benefit
- ☐ Canada Pension Plan Disability Benefit
- ☐ Canada Pension Plan Survivor's Benefit
- ☐ Other, (specify)

The next questions are only for those individuals who have filled
in one of our application forms during the past 12 months.

7. DID YOU APPLY FOR AN OLD AGE SECURITY PENSION, GUARANTEED
INCOME SUPPLEMENT OR CANADA PENSION PLAN BENEFIT
DURING THE PAST 12 MONTHS?

☐₁ yes ☐₂ no ☐₈ do not recall

Please go to question 10.

8. a) HOW DID YOU OBTAIN YOUR APPLICATION FORM(S)?
Check as many as apply.

☐ picked it up at Our Office
☐ wrote to Our Office
☐ it arrived automatically in the mail
☐ telephoned Our Office
☐ telephoned toll-free number
☐ from a friend or relative
☐ do not recall
☐ other, (specify)

- b) WAS THE WORDING EASY TO UNDERSTAND?

☐₁ yes ☐₂ no ☐₈ do not recall

- c) WAS THE PRINT LARGE ENOUGH?

☐₁ yes ☐₂ no ☐₈ do not recall

- d) DID YOU COMPLETE THE LANGUAGE PREFERENCE CODE ON THE
FORM, OR WERE YOU ASKED WHICH CODE SHOULD BE MARKED?

☐₁ yes ☐₂ no ☐₈ do not recall

9. DID YOU REQUIRE ANY HELP COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORMS(S)?

☐ ₁ yes

☐ ₂ no

☐ ₃ do not recall

Please go to question 10
on the next page.

IF YOU REQUIRED HELP TO COMPLETE THE APPLICATION FORM(S)...

a) WHAT DID YOU DO TO GET THIS HELP?

Check as many as apply.

☐ telephoned one of Our Offices

☐ visited one of Our Offices

☐ wrote to one of Our Offices

☐ asked a relative or friend for help

☐ other, (specify)

b) DID YOU GET THE HELP YOU REQUIRED?

☐ ₁ yes

☐ ₂ partially

☐ ₃ no

The next questions ask for your preferences about contacting one of Our Offices and receiving your cheques.

10. IF YOU HAD TO CONTACT ONE OF OUR OFFICES, WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING METHODS WOULD YOU MOST PREFER TO USE:
Check ONE ONLY please.

- ☐ ₁ telephone one of Our Offices
☐ ₂ visit one of Our Offices
☐ ₃ write a letter to one of Our Offices
☐ ₄ other, (specify)

11. HOW WOULD YOU PREFER TO RECEIVE YOUR CHEQUE?

- ☐ ₁ directly deposited to bank account
☐ ₂ mailed to home or post office mailbox
☐ ₃ other, (specify)

The next questions are about the delivery of your CANADA PENSION PLAN
and OLD AGE SECURITY cheques.

12. HAS THERE EVER BEEN A MONTH WHEN YOU HAVE NOT RECEIVED AN OLD AGE SECURITY OR CANADA PENSION PLAN CHEQUE THAT YOU WERE EXPECTING?

☐₁ yes ☐₂ no ☐₃ do not recall

Please go to question 14.

IF THERE HAS EVER BEEN A MONTH WHEN YOU DID NOT RECEIVED ONE OF
YOUR CANADA PENSION PLAN OR OLD AGE SECURITY CHEQUES...

- a) WHAT DID YOU DO ABOUT THIS?
Check as many as apply.

- ☐ telephoned one of Our Offices
☐ visited one of Our Offices
☐ wrote to one of Our Offices
☐ had a friend or relative help
☐ do not recall
☐ other, (specify)

- b) HOW LONG DID IT TAKE TO RECEIVE A REPLACEMENT FOR THE
CHEQUE THAT YOU DID NOT RECEIVE?

weeks

13. HOW LONG DO YOU THINK IT IS REASONABLE TO WAIT FOR THE
REPLACEMENT OF A CHEQUE THAT YOU DID NOT RECEIVE?

up to weeks

The next question asks about your CANADA PENSION PLAN RECORD OF EARNINGS STATEMENT. These statements indicate a CANADA PENSION PLAN contributor's life-time contributions and potential CANADA PENSION PLAN benefits.

These statements are sent every two years to all contributors over age 24.

Because the automatic mail-out of RECORD OF EARNINGS STATEMENTS is a relatively new program, you may not have ever received one.

14. HAVE YOU EVER RECEIVED A RECORD OF EARNINGS STATEMENT?

☐₁ yes ☐₂ no ☐₈ do not recall

☐₃ does not
apply (not a contributor)

Please go to question 15
on the next page.

IF YOU HAVE RECEIVED A RECORD OF EARNINGS STATEMENT...

a) WAS IT IN YOUR PREFERRED OFFICIAL LANGUAGE
(ENGLISH OR FRENCH)?

☐₁ yes ☐₂ no ☐₈ do not recall

b) WAS THIS STATEMENT CORRECT?

☐₁ yes ☐₂ no ☐ could not tell ☐₈ do not recall

Please go to question 15 on the next page.

c) WHAT DID YOU DO IF YOUR STATEMENT WAS NOT CORRECT?
Check as many as apply.

☐ telephoned one of Our Offices

☐ visited one of Our Offices

☐ wrote to one of Our Offices

☐ do not recall

☐ other, (specify)

d) WERE YOU SATISFIED WITH THE RESULT OF YOUR CONTACT WITH OUR
OFFICE REGARDING CHANGES TO YOUR RECORD OF EARNINGS STATEMENT?

☐₁ very
satisfied ☐₂ partially
satisfied ☐₃ dissatisfied

The next questions ask about the quality of telephone service you have received if you have ever called one of Our Offices.

15. HAVE YOU EVER TELEPHONED ONE OF OUR OFFICES?

- ☐ ₁ yes ☐ ₂ no ☐ ₃ do not recall

Please go to question 16.

IF YOU HAVE TELEPHONED ONE OF OUR OFFICES...

a) HOW DID YOU FIND THE TELEPHONE NUMBER FOR OUR OFFICE?

- ☐ ₁ found it in the telephone book
☐ ₂ called directory assistance
☐ ₃ asked a friend or relative
☐ ₄ do not recall
☐ ₅ other, (specify)

b) WHEN CALLING ONE OF OUR OFFICES, DID YOU EVER FIND THE TELEPHONE LINES BUSY?

- ☐ ₁ often ☐ ₂ sometimes ☐ ₃ never

c) WHAT DID YOU DO IF THE TELEPHONE LINES WERE BUSY?
Check as many as apply.

- ☐ kept calling until the phone was answered
☐ visited one of Our Offices instead
☐ wrote to one of Our Offices instead
☐ got help elsewhere
☐ other, (specify)

d) WHY DID YOU TELEPHONE OUR OFFICE?

Check as many as apply.

- ☐ because cheque did not arrive
- ☐ to make a complaint
- ☐ to change address
- ☐ to ask how to apply for a benefit
- ☐ to ask about a benefit
- ☐ to ask about application process
- ☐ to ask about Record of Earnings Statement
- ☐ to ask for an application form
- ☐ other, (specify)

e) WERE YOU GREETED USING BOTH ENGLISH AND FRENCH?

- ☐₁ yes ☐₂ no ☐₈ do not recall

f) WERE YOU SERVED IN THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF YOUR CHOICE (ENGLISH OR FRENCH)?

- ☐₁ yes ☐₂ no ☐₈ do not recall

g) HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE LANGUAGE QUALITY OF THE SERVICE YOU RECEIVED WHEN YOU LAST CALLED ONE OF OUR OFFICES?

- ☐₁ excellent ☐₂ good ☐₃ fair ☐₄ poor

h) DID YOU RECEIVE THE INFORMATION YOU REQUESTED?

- ☐₁ yes ☐₂ no ☐₈ do not recall

The next questions ask about the level of telephone service
you would like to receive.

16. HOW LONG WOULD YOU BE PREPARED TO WAIT "ON HOLD" IF YOU
CALLED ONE OF OUR OFFICES AND THE LINES WERE BUSY?

up to minutes

17. WE NORMALLY HANDLE TELEPHONE ENQUIRIES FROM 8:00am TO 4:00pm
MONDAY TO FRIDAY. WOULD YOU LIKE THESE HOURS EXTENDED TO...
Check ONE ONLY, please.

- ☐ ₁ 5:00pm ☐ ₂ 6:00pm ☐ ₃ 7:00pm ☐ ₄ 8:00pm
☐ ₅ current hours are satisfactory

18. IF YOU ARE PUT "ON HOLD", WOULD YOU PREFER TO LISTEN TO...

- ☐ ₁ information messages
☐ ₂ music
☐ ₃ information messages and music
☐ ₄ other, (specify)

Health and Welfare Canada often inserts other information with
OLD AGE SECURITY and CANADA PENSION PLAN cheques.

The next questions ask about any of these
cheque inserts that you may have read.

19. HOW OFTEN DO YOU READ THE INFORMATION INSERTED WITH YOUR CHEQUE?

☐ ₁ always ☐ ₂ sometimes ☐ ₃ never

☐ ₄ not applicable Please go to question 21.
(cheque is sent directly to bank)

20. HAVE ANY OF THE CHEQUE INSERTS PROMPTED
YOU TO TAKE ACTION?

☐ ₁ yes ☐ ₂ no ☐ ₃ do not recall

Please go to question 21.

IF ANY OF THE CHEQUE INSERTS HAVE PROMPTED YOU TO TAKE
ACTION, WHAT TYPE OF ACTION DID YOU TAKE?
Check as many as apply.

- ☐ reapplied for benefits
- ☐ applied for additional benefits
- ☐ called one of Our Offices
- ☐ suggested a friend or relative apply for benefits
- ☐ notified one of Our Offices about a change in
address, name or Social Insurance Number
- ☐ other, (specify)

21. IF YOUR CHEQUE IS NOW SENT DIRECTLY TO YOUR BANK, WOULD YOU LIKE
TO RECEIVE THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THE CHEQUE INSERTS?

☐ ₁ yes ☐ ₂ no ☐ ₃ not applicable
(receive cheque in the mail)

In the next question we would like your opinion on how useful the following information would be if included in cheque inserts.

22. HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE USEFULNESS OF THE FOLLOWING INSERTS GIVING INFORMATION ABOUT...

- a) Benefit rate increases under the CANADA PENSION PLAN and OLD AGE SECURITY

☐ ₁ very useful ☐ ₂ useful ☐ ₃ not useful

- b) Health and physical fitness issues

☐ ₁ very useful ☐ ₂ useful ☐ ₃ not useful

- c) Current events such as free trade or the Constitution

☐ ₁ very useful ☐ ₂ useful ☐ ₃ not useful

- d) environmental concerns

☐ ₁ very useful ☐ ₂ useful ☐ ₃ not useful

- e) income tax issues

☐ ₁ very useful ☐ ₂ useful ☐ ₃ not useful

- f) Retirement planning

☐ ₁ very useful ☐ ₂ useful ☐ ₃ not useful

- g) Reminders concerning the CANADA PENSION PLAN and OLD AGE SECURITY. For example, about change of address or finances, GUARANTEED INCOME SUPPLEMENT renewals, etc.

☐ ₁ very useful ☐ ₂ useful ☐ ₃ not useful

- h) Other suggestions,

Health and Welfare Canada publishes information brochures about OLD AGE SECURITY and the CANADA PENSION PLAN. The next question asks about any of these brochures that you may have read.

23. HAVE YOU READ ANY BROCHURES ABOUT OLD AGE SECURITY OR THE CANADA PENSION PLAN?

☐ ₁ yes

☐ ₂ no

☐ ₈ do not recall

Please go to question 24
on the next page.

a) IF YOU HAVE READ ANY OF OUR BROCHURES, HOW DID YOU GET THESE BROCHURES?

Check as many as apply.

☐ picked them up at one of Our Offices

☐ from a friend or relative

☐ picked them up at community agency or seniors' group

☐ from a doctor, lawyer or social worker

☐ at a supermarket, pharmacy or other store

☐ at a pre-retirement seminar or workshop

☐ other, (specify)

The next questions ask about the service that we provide in
Our Offices or client service centres.

24. HAVE YOU EVER VISITED ONE OF OUR OFFICES?

☐ ₁ yes

☐ ₂ no

☐ ₃ do not recall

Please go to question 25
on the next page.

IF YOU HAVE VISITED ONE OF OUR OFFICES...

a) WHY DID YOU VISIT ONE OF OUR OFFICES?
Check as many as apply.

☐ because cheque did not arrive

f) WAS THE OFFICE CLEAN?

☐₁ yes ☐₂ no ☐₃ do not recall

g) WERE THERE SIGNS THAT CLEARLY IDENTIFIED THE OFFICE?

☐₁ yes ☐₂ no ☐₃ do not recall

h) HOW DID YOU FIND THE ADDRESS OF OUR OFFICE?

- ☐₁ found in the telephone book
☐₂ called one of Our Offices
☐₃ saw the office when in the area
☐₄ asked a friend or relative
☐₅ do not recall
☐₆ other, (specify)

i) WAS THERE ENOUGH SEATING?

☐₁ yes ☐₂ no ☐₃ do not recall

j) WAS THE OFFICE EASY TO ENTER (e.g. ramps for wheelchairs, elevators where needed)?

☐₁ yes ☐₂ no ☐₃ do not recall

b) HOW WOULD YOU MOST LIKELY GET TO OUR OFFICE?
Check ONE ONLY please.

- ☐ ₁ by walking
- ☐ ₂ would drive
- ☐ ₃ would have a friend or relative drive
- ☐ ₄ by taxi
- ☐ ₅ by bus or subway

c) FROM YOUR HOME, IS OUR OFFICE EASY TO GET TO BY PUBLIC TRANSIT?

- ☐ ₁ yes
- ☐ ₂ no
- ☐ ₃ do not know
- ☐ ₄ not applicable (there is no public transit)

26. HOW LONG DO YOU THINK IT IS REASONABLE TO EXPECT TO WAIT
BEFORE BEING SERVED WHEN VISITING ONE OF OUR OFFICES?

up to minutes.

27. WHAT TIME OF DAY WOULD YOU PREFER TO VISIT OUR OFFICE?
Check ONE ONLY please.

- ☐ ₁ between 8:00am and 10:00am
- ☐ ₂ between 10:00am and 12:00 noon
- ☐ ₃ between 12:00 noon and 3:00pm
- ☐ ₄ between 3:00pm and 6:00pm
- ☐ ₅ other, (specify)
- ☐ ₆ would not visit one of Our Offices

28. IN YOUR OPINION, WHICH ONE (if any) OF THE FOLLOWING
IMPROVEMENTS WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO SEE IN OUR OFFICES?
Please check ONE ONLY.

- ☐ ₁ the use of a "Take-A-Number" system
- ☐ ₂ opportunity to make an appointment
- ☐ ₃ extended hours of operation
- ☐ ₄ no improvements needed

29. IF A FULL-TIME OFFICE IS NOT CURRENTLY OFFERED IN YOUR COMMUNITY, WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING WOULD YOU PREFER? Check ONE ONLY please.

☐ ₁ a part-time office

☐ ₂ a toll-free telephone service 5 days a week

☐ ₃ other, (specify)

The next questions ask about any letters that you may have written to one of Our Offices.

30. HAVE YOU EVER WRITTEN TO ONE OF OUR OFFICES?

☐ ₁ yes

☐ ₂ no

☐ ₃ do not recall

Please go to question 31
on the next page.

IF YOU HAVE WRITTEN TO ONE OF OUR OFFICES...

a) WHY DID YOU WRITE TO OUR OFFICE?

Check as many as apply.

☐ because cheque did not arrive

☐ to make a complaint

☐ to change address

☐ to ask how to apply for a benefit

☐ to ask about benefit

☐ to ask about application process

☐ to ask about Record of Earnings Statement

☐ to request an application form

☐ other, (specify)

b) HOW LONG DID IT TAKE FOR YOU TO RECEIVE A REPLY TO YOUR LETTER?

weeks

☐ do not recall

c) DID THE REPLY ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS?

☐₁ yes ☐₂ partially ☐₃ no ☐₄ do not recall

d) WAS THE REPLY CLEAR AND UNDERSTANDABLE?

☐₁ yes ☐₂ no ☐₃ do not recall

e) HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE LANGUAGE QUALITY OF THE REPLY?

☐₁ excellent ☐₂ good ☐₃ fair ☐₄ poor

f) HOW DID YOU FIND THE ADDRESS FOR OUR OFFICE?

Check as many as apply.

☐ found it in the telephone book

☐ called Our Office

☐ asked a friend or relative

☐ do not recall

☐ other, (specify)

31. HOW LONG DO YOU THINK IT IS REASONABLE TO WAIT FOR
A REPLY TO A LETTER WRITTEN TO ONE OF OUR OFFICES?

up to days

WE WELCOME YOUR COMMENTS ON THE QUALITY OF SERVICE YOU
HAVE RECEIVED THROUGH OUR OFFICES, AS WELL AS ANY OTHER
VIEWS YOU MAY HAVE ON WHAT WE CAN DO
TO IMPROVE OUR SERVICES.

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE.

PLEASE PLACE IT IN THE POSTAGE-PAID,
SELF-ADDRESSED ENVELOPE PROVIDED,
AND MAIL IT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE,
THANK YOU.

APPENDIX D

United States (U.S.) Social Security Administration (SSA) Use of Focus Groups

General

The U.S. SSA is using focus groups as one of several means of obtaining views on satisfaction from beneficiaries and members of the general public. This technique is one way to obtain opinions on service delivery quickly and cost-effectively although it has some limitations, as discussed below.

In the past year, focus groups have been conducted or are being planned, to discuss issues involving Social Security's major programs -- retirement, survivors, disability and assistance programs. Focus groups were also used for related topics, such as the quality of correspondence mailed to beneficiaries, service delivery to non-English speaking groups and methods of check payment.

Focus groups are useful for a variety of reasons:

- Focus groups are a cost- and time-effective way to generate qualitative data.
- They provide a setting for beneficiaries and members of the public who may have varying educational backgrounds and literacy levels to share and discuss their points of view.
- Observers (who may also be actual decisionmakers) are able to hear original reactions from participants (i.e., they make the abstract real).
- Focus groups have a synergistic effect: a statement by one person can trigger other participants to share their ideas and information.
- Videotapes and transcripts can be made of individual sessions, thus making future review possible, especially for those unable to directly observe the groups.

However, this technique also has its disadvantages. Among them are the following:

- Focus group members select themselves by agreeing to participate. Therefore, they may be very different from the general population; for example, greater risk-takers.
- Dominant group members tend to take over the lead of focus group discussions, producing a "group think" effect.

- Some participants may be unwilling to share information in a group setting because they may feel it is too private, embarrassing or unimportant.
- Discussions tend to focus on negative issues or complaints, rather than praise.
- Although lists of potential participants can be drawn from a random sample of beneficiaries, there is no guarantee that any selection method will yield a group of participants that truly represents the population.

Methodology

In a focus group, a small number of individuals (about 8 to 12) are brought together to discuss a topic, which the focus group sponsor selects. The discussion is directed by a trained moderator who follows an outline of issues, but also encourages participants to voice their own opinions. Since the task of being a moderator requires complex interpersonal and communication skills, it is essential to use trained moderators.

The sessions usually last no longer than 1 1/2 to 2 hours. Ideally, the site for a focus group should be a research facility with specially-equipped rooms featuring two-way mirrors (for observers) and audiovisual recording equipment (for videotaping). However, other possibilities include an agency office, the office of a research company or a hotel meeting room.

Experts recommend that two or three focus groups be utilized per customer segment. If all of a company's customers are homogeneous, only two or three focus groups are necessary.

For an examination of service delivery, SSA held 12 focus group sessions to include all the beneficiary and general public segments that were involved. The aim in selecting participants for these focus group sessions was to include a cross-section of current SSA beneficiaries and the general public based on type of benefit, recent contact with SSA, geographic location, age, sex, race and income. A contract was engaged with a consultant to handle the logistical requirements, such as locating the facilities, recruiting participants and videotaping each session. SSA provided the contractor with listings of current beneficiaries for use in recruitment, as well as a screening guide to aid in recruiting participants from the general public.

A moderator's discussion guide was prepared with open-ended questions and/or statements. This was done to encourage as much discussion as possible and to avoid leading questions or questions likely to generate overly short or unclear responses.

Findings

The focus group discussion provided an excellent vehicle for identifying and collecting information on the attributes that customers believe are most important to their satisfaction. The focus groups gave insight into customers' expectations, perceptions of the service they receive and suggestions for improvement.

These initial focus group sessions were successful in pointing out what SSA was doing right, what people expected and areas for improvement. Following are some of the observations that these discussions produced:

- SSA's methods of delivering service are appropriate. Participants prefer to have a variety of ways of obtaining service and a choice in determining how they interact with SSA.
- New methods of contacting SSA for service were suggested.
- Confidence in the Social Security program is low and participants' knowledge about the benefits provided is limited. There are differences in levels of confidence and knowledge depending on age.
- The quality of SSA's service is good. However, the service provided by nonurban versus urban offices is uneven. Urban offices have long waiting times and personnel are less courteous.
- Telephone service overall is good. However, there are problems involving busy signals and long periods on hold.
- To improve SSA's service, it was suggested that a caseworker approach should be considered. This would save time by having the same employee deal with an individual in all matters.
- There was an acknowledgement that optimal service may be too costly and that there has to be a balance between "wants" and costs.
- In general, requirements and procedures involved in obtaining benefits are not well understood and are believed to be too complex. This was especially apparent in discussions about disability benefits.

In summary, focus groups provide qualitative information, which is useful in the early stages of developing customer satisfaction measures. SSA decided to use focus groups in order to obtain insight into customer satisfaction and service delivery quickly. Later, selected issues became the subjects of quantitative studies (i.e., surveys).

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The next questions ask about the service the
Our Offices or client service cent

We apologize for the printing error
in the survey form under Appendix C.
Corrected pages are attached.

24. HAVE YOU EVER VISITED ONE OF OUR

☐ ₁ yes ☐ ₂ no ☐ ₃ do not

on the next page.

IF YOU HAVE VISITED ONE OF OUR OFFICES...

a) WHY DID YOU VISIT ONE OF OUR OFFICES?

Check as many as apply.

- ☐ because cheque did not arrive
- ☐ to make a complaint
- ☐ to change address
- ☐ to ask how to apply for a benefit
- ☐ to ask about benefit
- ☐ to ask about application process
- ☐ to ask about Record of Earnings Statement
- ☐ to pick up an application form
- ☐ other, (specify)

b) WERE YOU SERVED PROMPTLY?

☐ ₁ yes ☐ ₂ no ☐ ₃ do not recall

c) WERE YOU GREETED IN BOTH ENGLISH AND FRENCH?

☐ ₁ yes ☐ ₂ no ☐ ₃ do not recall

d) WERE YOU SERVED IN THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE
OF YOUR CHOICE (ENGLISH OR FRENCH)?

☐ ₁ yes ☐ ₂ no ☐ ₃ do not recall

e) HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE LANGUAGE QUALITY OF THE SERVICE
YOU RECEIVED WHEN LAST VISITING ONE OF OUR OFFICES?

☐ ₁ excellent ☐ ₂ good ☐ ₃ fair ☐ ₄ poor

f) WAS THE OFFICE CLEAN?

☐₁ yes ☐₂ no ☐₃ do not recall

g) WERE THERE SIGNS THAT CLEARLY IDENTIFIED THE OFFICE?

☐₁ yes ☐₂ no ☐₃ do not recall

h) HOW DID YOU FIND THE ADDRESS OF OUR OFFICE?

☐₁ found in the telephone book

☐₂ called one of Our Offices

☐₃ saw the office when in the area

☐₄ asked a friend or relative

☐₅ do not recall

☐₆ other, (specify)

i) WAS THERE ENOUGH SEATING?

☐₁ yes ☐₂ no ☐₃ do not recall

j) WAS THE OFFICE EASY TO ENTER (e.g. ramps for wheelchairs, elevators where needed)?

☐₁ yes ☐₂ no ☐₃ do not recall

25. DO YOU KNOW WHERE OUR OFFICE CLOSEST TO YOUR HOME IS LOCATED?

☐₁ yes

☐₂ no

Please go to question 26
on the next page.

IF YOU KNOW WHERE OUR CLOSEST OFFICE IS LOCATED...

a) HOW LONG WOULD IT TAKE YOU TO GET THERE FROM YOUR HOME?

minutes