

# Designing Surveys to Achieve Policy Change

## Glossary of Survey Terms

**Target population:** refers to the entire group of possible respondents to your survey question(s). “People who live in Marion County” is an example. Since it is improbable that you will be able to survey every individual in your target population, you must select a smaller number of people to survey, known as a sample.

**Sample:** a group of respondents selected from your target population.

**Random Sampling:** a sampling method in which ALL members of a target population have an equal and independent chance of being selected for the survey. Respondents are then randomly chosen to participate.

**Convenience sampling:** a sampling method which involves the sample being drawn from the target population that is close to hand. That is, a sample population selected because it is readily available and convenient.

**Intercept Survey:** a way of selecting a convenience sample of respondents as they pass by specified areas.

**Generalizability:** refers to the extent to which research findings and conclusions from a study conducted on a sample population can be applied to the broader target population.

**Response rate:** refers to the ratio of the number of people who answered the survey divided by the number of people selected for the sample. It is usually expressed in the form of a percentage (also known as the completion rate or return rate).

**Interviewer bias:** refers to a partiality towards a preconceived response based on the structure, phrasing, or tenor of questions asked in the interviewing process. Questions laced with interviewer bias can influence respondents in such a way that it distorts the outcome of the interview.

**Institutional Review Board (IRB):** the group or committee that is given the responsibility by an institution to review that institution's research projects involving human subjects. The primary purpose of an IRB review is to assure the protection of the safety, rights and welfare of the human subjects. Another commonly used name for an IRB is "Human Subjects Review Committee."

**Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA):** HIPAA provides protection for the privacy of certain individually identifiable health data, referred to as protected health information (PHI).