



**ACHA-NFSHA Web Version  
Frequently Asked Questions  
REVISED May 2023**

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## INTRODUCTION

The ACHA-NFSHA Program Office uses Qualtrics, LLC *Research Suite* to design and distribute the ACHA-NFSHA and to manage the online data collection. The ACHA-NFSHA is administered CONFIDENTIALLY (not anonymously). Each participating campus provides to ACHA a letter of invitation/informed consent (template is provided), a subject line, the email addresses of faculty/staff in your sample, a copy of your IRB approval, and an ACHA-NFSHA Web Based Survey [Order Form](#).

This document is organized to answer specific questions you may have around various aspects of ACHA Web Survey implementation. The first portion of the document discusses the implementation of the ACHA-NFSHA Web Survey using our standard, confidential protocol, whereby ACHA contacts the faculty and staff in your sample on your behalf. If you are required to conduct the survey anonymously, or if you are unable to supply ACHA with your email addresses, alternatives to our standard protocol are discussed at the end of the document. **Please read this document carefully before embarking on an ACHA-NFSHA web survey effort.**

## FACULTY AND STAFF/DATA PRIVACY PROTECTIONS

### **Q: What measures does ACHA take to ensure/protect participant and campus data privacy?**

A: ACHA agrees to use the email address provided by the institution for the sole purpose of requesting participation in the ACHA-NFSHA. The email addresses are used only for a single survey effort and not retained for future NFSHA implementations at the same school. During data collection the email addresses are stored on a password protected secure server on the cloud with BOX. The file containing email addresses is also uploaded into Qualtrics Research Suite software. Per both the Qualtrics and ACHA policies, email addresses are never shared with another party nor used for any other purpose. After the data collection period ends and before ACHA-NFSHA results are released to the campus, the files containing email addresses are deleted from both the Qualtrics and BOX servers. To ensure that no copy of email addresses is retained at ACHA, the files containing email addresses are intentionally deleted from Trash folders in Box and cannot be retrieved after a 14-day grace period through Box User Services Support Team.

### **Q: Is it possible to link a particular email address to a set of survey responses?**

A: Yes, technically it is possible (which is why the survey is described as confidential and not anonymous), but ACHA and Qualtrics go to great lengths to make it very difficult to do so. The Qualtrics software generates a unique survey link for each faculty/staff on the mailing list. The unique survey link is connected to a randomly generated Response ID number. The link between an email address and a Response ID number is stored on the Qualtrics server, is not accessible to ACHA, and is destroyed by Qualtrics upon survey submission. Only the Response ID number for any given faculty/staff is recorded with their survey responses. The ACHA-NFSHA survey is set to PREVENT the collection of a person's name, email address, and IP address with their survey submission.

### **Q: How do you track which participants actually submit the survey?**

A: The Qualtrics software generates a unique survey link for each participant on the mailing list. The use of a unique link per participant enables us to do five things: 1) prevent more than one survey submission from the same participant, 2) prevent participants outside your sample from submitting surveys, 3) contact only non-responders with survey reminder messages, 4) conduct a

random drawing to award incentives at the close of the survey, and 5) allow the participant to complete the survey in multiple sessions and from multiple devices.

As mentioned above, the connection between a participant email address and a particular Response ID number is maintained behind the scenes in the Qualtrics system and is destroyed when the survey responses are submitted. ACHA does not collect participants' names, email addresses, nor IP addresses with survey responses.

**Q: How do ACHA-NFSHA-Web survey participants provide consent?**

A: Consent is given in two ways. First, consent is implied when a participant clicks on the link within the email message to access the survey. The template letter of invitation/consent (see *Instructions for NFSHA Web Surveyors* document at [https://www.acha.org/ACHA/Programs\\_and\\_Services/NFSHA.aspx](https://www.acha.org/ACHA/Programs_and_Services/NFSHA.aspx) ) includes instructions that stipulate participants who are 18 years of age or older need only click on the link to the survey to give their consent. If there is additional consent information required by your campus IRB, you may want to include a link in your invitation e-mail that will direct participants to further information. It is recommended that you keep the letter of invitation/consent clear and concise. **If you choose to alter the consent language from the template letter we provide, please be sure to let the ACHA-NFSHA Program office review your edits before you submit your IRB application.** ACHA will not send a survey invitation/consent letter that does not accurately describe our data collection methods.

Secondly, the following message is displayed on page 1 of the ACHA-NFSHA. It contains some additional instructions for the participant and states: "By clicking the 'Begin Survey' button below, you agree that the purpose of this study has been thoroughly explained to you; you are at least 18 years of age; and you consent to participate in the survey."



## National Faculty and Staff Health Assessment

The ACHA-NFSHA asks about various aspects of your health and is completely voluntary. You may skip any question you do not want to answer. You may complete the survey in multiple sessions. Use the buttons at the bottom of the survey to navigate through the survey. Do not use your browser's back button.

By clicking the 'Begin Survey' button below, you agree that:

The purpose of this study has been thoroughly explained to you; you are at least 18 years of age; and you consent to participate in the survey.

Please direct any questions about the survey to the campus contact identified in your survey invitation email.

[Begin Survey](#)

0% Survey Completion 100%



AMERICAN COLLEGE HEALTH ASSOCIATION

### **Q: Can we require our faculty and staff to take the ACHA-NFSHA?**

A: One of the important tenants of informed consent is that participation in the survey must be voluntary. ACHA will not administer an ACHA-NFSHA that is mandatory or required of participants. When the ACHA-NFSHA is administered as part of a classroom or other academic assignment, an alternative assignment must be offered for participants who choose not to participate in the NFSHA.

### **Q: Is it possible to administer the ACHA-NFSHA anonymously?**

A: Yes, it is possible to administer the ACHA-NFSHA survey anonymously, but it's not recommended. We can provide an anonymous static link for your ACHA-NFSHA survey and ACHA has disabled collection of IP addresses and other personal identifiers within the survey. When conducting an anonymous ACHA-NFSHA survey, the survey persistence (the ability to start the survey and come back to it later) is achieved via a web-browser cookie on the participant's computer. In this case, the survey is persistent only from the computer or device where the survey was started. It's not possible to start the survey on one device and complete it on another using a web-browser cookie. If the participant disables or deletes the cookie, or if you prefer that we not enable cookies, your campus ACHA-NFSHA will not offer persistence and the participant will need to complete the survey in one sitting (which typically takes 20-30 minutes).

Additionally, when using an anonymous survey link, we no longer have control of the sample in that we cannot prevent duplicate submissions from the same participant, nor can we prevent participants from outside your sample from submitting surveys. Finally, when using an anonymous, static survey link to administer the ACHA-NFSHA, we cannot assist you with awarding incentives.

**Q. Does ACHA host the ACHA-NFSHA Web internally on their servers and what kind of security is provided?**

A. ACHA administers the ACHA-NFSHA web survey via the Qualtrics, LLC Research Suite product. Qualtrics is an Application Service Provider (ASP) with a Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) platform for creating, distributing, and collecting data from online surveys. Many colleges and universities also use Qualtrics for data collection, so it is possible that your campus IRB and other campus administrators may already be familiar with Qualtrics and the lengths that they go to secure the data. Institutions using Qualtrics will have access to Qualtrics Security Whitepaper. Please contact your campus Qualtrics Brand Administrator for more information.

The Qualtrics Security Statement is here: <http://www.qualtrics.com/security-statement/>. In summary, Qualtrics servers are protected by high-end firewall systems, and vulnerability scans are performed regularly. Complete penetration tests are performed yearly. All services have quick failover points and redundant hardware, and complete backups are performed nightly. Qualtrics uses Transport Layer Security (TLS) encryption (also known as HTTPS) for all transmitted data and also protects surveys with passwords and HTTP referrer checking. The data is hosted by third party data centers that are SSAE-16 SOC II certified. All data at rest are encrypted, and data on deprecated hard drives are destroyed by U.S. DOD methods and delivered to a third-party data destruction service. Qualtrics deploys the general requirements set forth by many Federal Acts including the FISMA Act of 2002 and meets or exceeds the minimum requirements as outlined in FIPS Publication 200.

Per the Terms of Service with Qualtrics, ACHA owns all survey content and data produced and collected with Qualtrics Research Suite. Qualtrics considers data collected by ACHA confidential and will only access the data for technical support and with the express permission of ACHA. This is discussed in detail in the Qualtrics Terms of Service: <http://www.qualtrics.com/terms-of-service/> and the Qualtrics Privacy Statement: <http://www.qualtrics.com/privacy-statement/>.

Likewise, files stored on the servers at BOX are password protected. ACHA and Qualtrics, LLC will use the participant email addresses provided by your campus only for a single ACHA-NFSHA administration. The addresses will not be used for any other purpose, retained after the data collection period, nor shared with any other organizations.

**Q: Does the ACHA hold a Certificate of Confidentiality from NIH for the ACHA-NFSHA?**

A: No, NIH will not issue a blanket Certificate of Confidentiality that will apply to all participating campuses. Any campus that requires a Certificate of Confidentiality must apply for one with NIH. See the NIH Certificates of Confidentiality Kiosk at: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/coc/> for more information.

**Q: How does ACHA protect participant privacy in the absence of an NIH Certificate of Confidentiality?**

A: As explained in various parts of this document, participant survey responses are connected to a unique Responder ID number which prevents multiple submissions from the same participant and keeps participants from outside your sample from submitting a survey. While both Qualtrics and

ACHA take numerous measures to protect the privacy of participants who participate in the survey, it is still possible that either organization could be served with a subpoena that would require us to identify and release survey responses from a particular participant.

In order to minimize the threat to participant privacy ACHA employs the following techniques in managing participant contact information:

- The link between a Responder ID number and a particular participant email address is made within the Qualtrics platform and is not stored at ACHA.
- The only identifying information stored with survey responses is the randomly generated unique Responder ID number. IP addresses are not recorded with survey responses.
- Files containing participant email addresses are never included in the routine file back-up process at ACHA.
- No survey results are made available to participating campuses until all files containing participant email addresses are removed from the servers at both BOX and Qualtrics. Therefore, in the unlikely event that something in the survey results might trigger a legal action, there is no way to link a specific email address or first name to a particular set of responses.

*Please note that the procedures outlined above only apply when using the normal ACHA-NFSHA survey methodology where ACHA provides the survey links directly to the participants via the Qualtrics system, and schools are not provided access to identifiable data. If the school is providing the survey links directly to the participant, or if the school has IRB approval to collect identifiable data, the privacy procedures differ from those described above.*

**Q. My IRB wants to know what kind of training ACHA-NFSHA staff has with regard to protection of human subjects in research.**

A. All ACHA-NFSHA staff have completed the Human Participants Protection Education for Research Teams online course sponsored by the National Institutes of Health, and the Social and Behavior Sciences Course in the Responsible Conduct of Research sponsored by the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative at the University of Miami. Certificates of completion are on file at ACHA and available upon request.

**Q: Does the emailing system offer the participant the option to unsubscribe from the survey mailing list?**

A: Yes, to ensure unsubscribe compliance with the CAN-SPAM Act of 2003, all ACHA-NFSHA email communication with participants contain the following statement at the end of the message:

“If you do not want to receive reminder messages about completing the survey, please use this link to remove yourself from the survey mailing list: (insert unsubscribe link here)”

Any participant that clicks on the link provided is automatically removed from the mailing list and will not receive any subsequent reminder messages sent to non-responders in the sample.

## **CONTACTING PARTICIPANTS**

**Q: How are the participants contacted using the NFSHA-Web?**

A: ACHA contacts participants to participate in the ACHA-NFSHA through a letter of invitation sent via e-mail. This email message also serves as an informed consent. As indicated in the letter, consent is provided when the participant uses the link within the email message to access the survey.

You provide the text of the letter of invitation to ACHA as well as the subject line you want included with the e-mail. (You'll find a letter template available on our website.) You must also supply ACHA with a list of participant e-mail addresses in the second column of an Excel spreadsheet file. Additionally, you may want to personalize the electronic letter of invitation/consent sent to each participant with the participant's first name, such as "Dear Mary" (Customization charges apply. See [order form](#) for details). If so, add the **preferred** first name corresponding to each e-mail address in the first column of the spreadsheet file. This information can usually be found at your Registrar's Office or Office of Institutional Research. If you don't want us to personalize the survey invitations with first names, simply leave the first column of the spreadsheet blank. (If you are unable to access preferred first names, we suggest not personalizing the survey invitations to reduce the risk of deadnaming a participant).

**Q: Does ACHA send reminder messages to all participants or just those who have not responded to the survey?**

A: ACHA contacts only non-responders with a reminder e-mail. Up to 5 reminder messages to non-responders are included in the price of the survey. We recommend labeling the final reminder sent with a "last chance" (or similar) subject line and including a deadline for submitting survey responses.

**Q: How can I tell if our survey invitations or reminder messages have been sent?**

A: There are a couple of ways for you to monitor what's happening with your NFSHA email messages. We encourage you to use both methods to double check that everything is running smoothly. First, we add you (the campus contact person) to the mailing list once we receive it from you. This will enable us to send you a test message and it will also ensure that you will receive all messages going to your participants in real time – AS LONG AS YOU DO NOT USE THE SURVEY LINK PROVIDED IN THE MESSAGE TO SUBMIT A SURVEY. If you are also on the list to take the survey for your institution, we recommend waiting to submit until after the third reminder has been sent.

The second way you can monitor whether your messages are being sent is to monitor the number of responses. You will receive a URL from the ACHA-NFSHA Program Office shortly after the launch of your NFSHA survey. This link will allow you to see the number of responses submitted for your survey daily. If you are monitoring this link regularly, you will notice a jump in the number of responses for the 24-36 hours each message we send to participants. When you see the number of submissions changing rapidly, you can be sure that an email has recently been sent to your participants. Please notify the ACHA-NFSHA Program Office if you were expecting a reminder message to go out, but do not notice an increase in responses within 24 hours.

**Q: Is it possible to contact participants at a personal or "preferred" email address, rather than their campus email address?**

A: Yes, ACHA-NFSHA email communications may be sent to email addresses unaffiliated with campus (Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo, etc.), however doing so does present some challenges. When campus email addresses are used, it's relatively easy to work with the campus IT department to ensure your invitations make it through the campus server to your participants (see the section on SPAM AND RATE CONTROL FILTERS). This is not the case with other email service providers, so there is a greater chance of the messages not reaching your participants. While ACHA takes measures to reduce the likelihood of complications from using personal or "preferred" email



addresses, the process is not foolproof and message delivery errors are more common when personal email addresses are used.

**Q: What if my school will not allow me to provide ACHA with participants' e-mail addresses?**

A: If your campus prohibits the release of e-mail addresses to ACHA, you may still administer the NFSHA-Web via an "INTERNAL" NFSHA survey. See the section on INTERNAL surveying for more details. Note that there is no discount in survey pricing when using this methodology – quantity will be based on the number of unique survey URL's assigned to your school.

**Q: My school will not allow me to transfer the participant email addresses to ACHA via email. Is there an alternative, more secure way to provide the file to the ACHA-NFSHA Program Office?**

A: Many schools simply email the file containing participant email addresses to ACHA – some of them choose to send the file as a password protected document and provide us with the password separately. If your campus has a secure file sharing system and you can add one of the ACHA-NFSHA Program Office staff as a user, then we are willing to download your file from the campus system. Another option is to exchange the file using a third-party secure file sharing service, such as Dropbox ([www.dropbox.com](http://www.dropbox.com)).

**Q: My campus will not allow ACHA access to participant e-mail addresses and my IT department has told me that they can only blast distribute static (identical) messages to participants. The e-mail messages cannot be personalized with a unique survey URL for each participant. Is there another way to administer the ACHA-NFSHA Web?**

A: If there is no way to remedy this problem on campus, ACHA can provide a static survey URL for your campus NFSHA survey implementation. See the section on ANONYMOUS surveying for more details. Please note that there is no discount in survey pricing when using this methodology – quantity will be based on the size of the campus population.

**Q: Does ACHA provide a template I can use for the letter of invitation/informed consent?**

A: Yes, ACHA offers a template letter of invitation/consent that you may edit to meet the specific needs of your campus (local campus contact, incentives) or requirements of your IRB. You'll find a copy of the template document on our website at [https://www.acha.org/ACHA/Programs\\_and\\_Services/NFSHA.aspx](https://www.acha.org/ACHA/Programs_and_Services/NFSHA.aspx)

**Q: Do I have to use the ACHA letter of invitation/consent as provided in *Instructions for Web Surveyors* document?**

A: It is recommended that you stick as closely as you can to the template letter provided by ACHA. The letter describes the methodology we use to administer the survey and collect the data. **If you need to make changes to our standard template letter, you are encouraged to share them with the ACHA-NFSHA Program Office for feedback BEFORE you submit your IRB application.** ACHA will not send a survey invitation/consent letter that does not accurately describe our data collection methods.

**Q: The template for the letter of invitation/consent is rather long. Is it possible to shorten the letter?**

A: By default, the survey invitation email contains the bulk of the consent information and is unique to your campus, and page 1 of the survey briefly highlights some generic key points about the survey. (See graphic on page 4.) Instead of providing the more detailed information within the body of the survey invitation email, it is possible to send a shorter email to the participants and provide the bulk of the consent information as the first page of the survey (Customization



charges apply. See [order form](#) for details). In this case, you would need to provide the ACHA-NFSHA program office with two separate documents – the text for the email survey invitation and the text for the consent language on page one of the survey.

**Q: The ACHA-NFSHA survey has launched on my campus, and I just learned that there are participants that I need to add to our sample. Is it possible to do this after the survey launches?**

A: Yes, it's possible, but not easy. We cannot add participants to an NFSHA survey campaign after the initial invitations are sent to your participants. We encourage schools to spend time on the front end of the survey to ensure an accurate and inclusive sample and do their best to avoid this problem. If you find that you have participants that must be surveyed after the initial invitations have been sent, we are willing to add a supplemental mailing list to your NFSHA survey. Charges apply. See [fee schedule](#) for details.

**Q: Do I have to provide a separate “reminder letter” to the ACHA-NFSHA Program Office?**

A: It's not necessary that you provide a separate reminder letter for follow up messages to non-responders, unless there are changes necessary to the original letter. In the absence of a separate reminder letter, we will simply adjust the greeting in your original letter to indicate that it is a follow up. If you choose to send separate reminder letters, customization charges apply. See [order form](#) for details.

**Q: Can we designate a subject line to accompany the survey invitation and reminder emails to the participants?**

A: Yes, you may specify a subject line for the survey invitations. It's helpful to personalize the subject line to include your school name so your participants know the communication relates to your college/university. If you do not provide a specific subject line, we will use the default subject line “XYZ Participant Health Survey,” (where XYZ is the name of your school and/or health center.) Reminders to non-responders typically include the word “Reminder:” added to the start of the original subject line. Beware of “spammy” sounding subject lines such as “Win prizes!” or “Earn a chance to win \$100!” It's helpful to mention the school and/or health center name in the subject line to offer legitimacy to the effort (e.g., “XYZU Participant Health Survey”). Please see the section on Spam Filters for tips on avoiding a “spammy-sounding” subject line:

<http://www.qualtrics.com/university/researchsuite/misc-pages/misc/avoid-being-marked-as-spam/>

**Q: How long should I keep the survey open? How many times should we contact non-responders?**

A: The scheduling of the data collection period, including reminder messages to non-responders is entirely up to the survey coordinator and must be communicated to the ACHA-NFSHA Program Office. The majority of participants tend to respond to a web survey invitation (or reminder message) right away (within 36 – 48 hours), or not at all. They don't typically keep the invitation and come back to it at a later date to complete; therefore, it is not necessary to wait very long between email contacts with the participants.

We recommend a survey data collection period of no more than 3 weeks, with reminder messages sent to non-responders every 3-4 days. It also helps to vary the days and times that your messages are sent. All messages are scheduled by the ACHA-NFSHA Program Office in advance, so it is possible for you to select a specific date and time for your message delivery to begin.

**Q: Can we use the NFSHA logo in our marketing materials?**

A: No, use of the NFSHA logo is not permitted. If you wish to identify yourself as an ACHA institutional member, the ACHA Institutional Membership Seal is below for use in email signatures, invitation letters, etc.



### THE FACULTY AND STAFF SURVEY EXPERIENCE

**Q: How do my participants access the survey?**

A: ACHA will email each of your participants their own unique URL for the survey. The participant need only click on the survey link within the email (see template in Web Survey Instructions document) and page 1 of the survey will be displayed in their browser window as shown below.



## National Faculty and Staff Health Assessment

The ACHA-NFSHA asks about various aspects of your health and is completely voluntary. You may skip any question you do not want to answer. You may complete the survey in multiple sessions. Use the buttons at the bottom of the survey to navigate through the survey. Do not use your browser's back button.

By clicking the 'Begin Survey' button below, you agree that:

The purpose of this study has been thoroughly explained to you; you are at least 18 years of age; and you consent to participate in the survey.

Please direct any questions about the survey to the campus contact identified in your survey invitation email.

[Begin Survey](#)

0% Survey Completion 100%



AMERICAN COLLEGE HEALTH ASSOCIATION

### **Q: How long does it take to complete the survey? Does the participant need to complete the survey in one sitting?**

A: The ACHA-NFSHA takes about 20-30 minutes to complete. The survey is “persistent,” in that a participant may begin the survey, take a break, and return to the survey to complete it in another session. Persistence for the ACHA-NFSHA is achieved via a web session ID embedded in the survey URL and maintained by the Qualtrics server. This feature ensures that each survey link is used only once and allows a participant to pick up where they left off if they leave the survey and come back to it later. Each time the participant encounters a page break in the survey, their responses up to that page break are saved and will remain populated the next time they use the survey link. Because persistence is managed on the Qualtrics server (rather than placing a “cookie” on the participant’s computer) it is possible for the participant to begin taking the survey on one device and finish it on another.

### **Q: Is it possible to take the ACHA-NFSHA on a mobile device?**

A: Yes, the survey is formatted to display on a mobile device such as a mobile phone or tablet. On smaller devices, it’s best to view the survey in horizontal or landscape orientation rather than vertical or portrait.

### **Q: How will my participants know if their survey has been successfully submitted?**

A: There are two things a participant will see upon successful survey submission. First, when they hit the “submit survey” button at the end of the survey, one of the following messages will be displayed in their web browser window.

If the school is not offering an incentive, the participants’ web browser will display this message:



**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!**



If the campus is offering incentives through a random drawing, the participants’ web browser will display this message instead:



**Thank you for participating!**

Your responses have been submitted to the secure server.

Your email address was automatically entered in the drawing to win a prize as described in your survey email invitation. No further action is required to enter the drawing – winners will be notified via email by their campus survey coordinator at a later date.

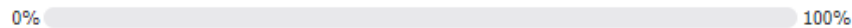
Your time and input is invaluable to us and is greatly appreciated!



Second, the participant will receive an email from the Qualtrics system. Note that because the email message is addressed to a specific person, it can also serve as proof of survey participation.

Finally, if a participant clicks on the survey link after they've submitted the survey, they will see a message telling them they have already taken the survey.

You have either already completed the survey or your session has expired.



**Q: Is the ACHA-NFSHA Section 508 Compliant?**

A: The Federal Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility and Compliance Act (1998) is Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and establishes requirements that information technology systems may be operated in a variety of ways and do not rely on a single sense or ability of the user. The ACHA-NFSHA is Section 508 compliant and accessible to the visually

impaired via screen reader software. A copy of the Qualtrics Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) is available on the ACHA-NFSHA website if required by your campus.

## AWARDING INCENTIVES TO SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

### **Q: Can ACHA help us select random respondents to award participation incentives?**

A: Yes, ACHA has a number of mechanisms in place to help with awarding incentives. Throughout the data collection process, our emailing software automatically tracks whether a particular participant submits a survey. At the end of the data collection period, we export a list of all participants from which we randomly draw your winners. The email addresses of the random winners are sent to the campus survey administrator, who in turn contacts the participants. Please note that incentives must be awarded immediately after the data collection period and before survey results are returned to the campus. Once all files containing email addresses are destroyed, it is impossible for ACHA to select random winners.

### **Q: We plan to award all survey participants a small incentive rather than (or in addition to) a drawing for a smaller number of larger value incentives. How can we tell which participants participated and which ones did not?**

A: There are two ways to address this issue. The first (and preferred) method is to customize the auto-generated thank-you email message set up for your NFSHA survey. By default, all survey responders will receive an automatic, generic thank-you email message immediately upon survey submission – see example below. It is possible to pay an additional fee to customize the message with instructions to participants about claiming their incentive. Because the message is transmitted via email and is addressed to a particular participant, the message can serve as proof-of-participation for that participant. (This method can also serve to remind participants about campus resources relevant to the topics raised in the survey.)

If you indicate in your letter of invitation that ACHA will provide your school with a list of all survey participants so that incentives can be awarded, then ACHA can provide you will a list of email addresses, in alphabetical order, of all participants that submitted a survey. The school would then contact the participants about their incentives directly. Because this option may make participants feel less comfortable about participating in the survey, using the customized thank-you email message mentioned above is preferred. Customization charges apply. See [order form](#) for details.

### **Q: Due to state/campus regulations/policies, my campus requires me to ensure that participants who choose not to complete a survey are given the option to enter the drawing to win an incentive. Is there a mechanism in place so that non-participants may enter the drawing for an incentive?**

A: The survey software does not provide a mechanism for participants to opt in or out of the survey incentives. All participants who submit a survey are included in the random drawing for incentives. If your campus requires you to offer non-responders the opportunity for an incentive, you can include an instruction in your survey email for these participants to contact the campus survey administrator directly. The survey administrator will maintain a list of email addresses of these participants and forward the list to ACHA upon completion of the data collection period. ACHA will add these participants to the pool of eligible participants before drawing the random winners.

**Q: In prior ACHA-NFSHA survey administrations we were able to award incentives based on the order the survey was submitted (e.g., every 10<sup>th</sup> responder, every 50<sup>th</sup> responder.) Is it still possible to use this type of incentive structure?**

A: No. Data Collection via the Qualtrics platform offers the opportunity to provide the survey responders a higher level of privacy by stripping all identifiers from survey data upon survey submission. This means we no longer have a record of the order of the submissions. If you choose to continue this type of incentive structure, you will need to develop another system for tracking the order of participant submissions.

One option would be for you to set up a separate online survey to collect participant info for awarding incentives. If your supplemental survey is set up on a secure server (<https://>) we can program your NFSHA survey to redirect the participant to it upon NFSHA survey submission. You could then award your incentives based on the order the participants submit their info in the second database – which will be entirely separate from the NFSHA responses. Customization charges apply. See [order form](#) for details.

Another option would be to utilize the confirmation email that each participant is sent upon survey submission to give the participants instructions for entering the drawing for incentives. You may offer a link to a supplemental survey on this page or instruct them to forward the email to someone who will be managing the incentives. There is an additional charge to customize the confirmation email. See [order form](#) for details.

Note that both options give the survey coordinator the opportunity to award incentives throughout the data collection period as they will have access to this information in real-time.

**Q: We'd like to award incentives throughout the data collection period in an effort to better promote the survey among participants. Is this possible?**

A: It is possible, but not something the ACHA-NFSHA Program Office can help you with. We can only draw random winners for you after the survey period closes. If you need to be able to award incentives throughout the data collection period, you will need to use one of the two options mentioned in the question above.

**Q: Our incentive distribution plan requires that participants show proof of participation in the survey. Will the “thank-you” page displayed upon survey submission serve as proof?**

A: No, there is nothing unique about the survey generic thank-you web page that would identify a specific participant (see section on THE PARTICIPANT SURVEY EXPERIENCE). Multiple copies of the page may be printed or the URL for the page may be shared to extend access to non-participants, so the thank-you page is not really proof of participation. Even so, some schools have made the decision to accept the thank-you page as proof of participation to distribute small incentives with very little abuse of the system.

A better “proof of participation” would be the automatic, generic thank-you message that all survey responders receive via email upon survey submission. Because this message is sent as an email addressed to a specific participant, it can serve as proof of participation uniquely for each participating participant. This message may be customized for an additional fee if necessary.



**Q: How can we award incentives if we are sending the email invitations internally rather than having ACHA send the survey invitations to participants?**

A: See section on INTERNAL surveying methodology.

**Q: Is it possible to do a random drawing for incentive winners if we are administering the ACHA-NFSHA anonymously with a static survey link?**

A: See section on ANONYMOUS surveying methodology.

## CUSTOMIZING THE SURVEY

**Q: Can we delete, move, or reword questions on the ACHA-NFSHA?**

A: No, it is not possible to alter existing items on the ACHA-NFSHA survey

**Q: Can we add extra questions to the ACHA-NFSHA Web?**

A: Yes, it is possible to add additional questions to the end of your campus ACHA-NFSHA survey. The cost varies depending on the number of discrete variables the question will add to your data set. Each additional variable is counted as a separate question, regardless of how the questions are numbered. If the respondent is instructed to “select the best response” then the overall question results in one variable. If the respondent is instructed to “select all that apply”, then each item on the list of responses is individually counted as a variable or question. For example, the following question is actually four additional variables on the ACHA-NFSHA:

In the last 12 months, did a medical professional ever prescribe you the following narcotics? (Select all that apply)

- a. Codeine
- b. Hydrocodone
- c. Oxycodone
- d. Tramadol

The costs for adding extra variables follows. Prices are based on ACHA Institutional Membership status and are presented as Member/Non-Member prices.

Adding one unique variable that will be used to create a custom report – No charge.  
This variable will be added free of charge, but the custom report charge will still apply (\$400/\$600).

Up to five unique variables - \$700/\$1000  
All 5 programmed into the survey, the SPSS data set, and the institutional frequency report.

You may add more than 5 extra questions, but in doing so NONE of the variables will appear in the institutional frequency report. Variables will be programmed into the survey and the SPSS data file only. You would need to use the SPSS raw data file to report the results of your extra questions.

Prices are as follows:

Up to 15 unique variables - \$700/\$1000  
16 – 50 unique variables - \$1500/\$2000  
51 – 75 unique variables - \$2250/\$3000  
76 – 100 unique variables - \$3000/\$4000

(Each additional 25 variables is \$750/\$1000)

To request an estimate for the cost of your extra questions, please send a copy of the questions to the ACHA-NFSHA Program Office. Please allow **three weeks** to program the additional questions.

Surveyors are discouraged from adding any questions that are not absolutely necessary. The ACHA-NFSHA is already a very long survey. Please consider this when adding additional questions, as excessive length can deter participation.

Custom questions will only appear in one report package. If additional report packages are ordered, please specify which report you want your 5 (or fewer) variables included on. If you want your custom questions included on the additional report packages the cost is \$150 for members/\$225 for non-members for each additional report.

**Q: Is it possible to add items from another survey as extra questions at the end of the ACHA-NFSHA?**

A: Yes, but for items that are copy written, you must document the copy write-holders expressed permission to use the items.

**Q: Is it possible to customize the thank-you page that participants see upon survey submission?**

A: If you would prefer (or your IRB requires you) to customize the thank-you page specifically for your participants, you will need to create your own website and provide the URL to the ACHA-NFSHA Program Office. Your ACHA-NFSHA survey will be programmed to automatically redirect to your campus-specific page, rather than one of our generic pages upon survey submission. This allows the campus to collect participant information to use in a drawing for incentives (in the event that a static survey link is used), to provide additional information to survey participants, or to direct participants to a supplemental survey **disconnected from the ACHA-NFSHA data collection process**. Your campus-created thank you page must be hosted on a secure server, such that the URL begins with "https://" rather than "http://". Customization charges apply. See [order form](#) for details.

**Q: Is it possible to change the "from" address of the survey invitation email?**

A: The survey invitation and reminder messages will appear to come from "National Faculty and Staff Health Assessment<ACHA\_nationaloffice@acha.org>" unless otherwise requested. It is possible to change the name associated with that address. For example, we could make your survey messages appear to come from "Jane Smith, Dean of Participants <ACHA\_nationaloffice@acha.org>," or "Bailey Participant Health Center <ACHA\_nationaloffice@acha.org>," or "Healthy Tigers <ACHA\_nationaloffice@acha.org>."

If you would like to change the "from address" (ACHA\_nationaloffice@acha.org), the following steps would need to occur.

- First, verify with your IT department that they are willing to set up a DKIM record allowing ACHA to send messages that appear to be from a campus domain. (It's impossible to change the "from address" without the help of your IT department.) You can share this information from the [Qualtrics Support Page](#) with your IT department.
- Confirm with your IT department which domain (everything after the @ in an email address) and email address should be used as the "from address." Many campuses prefer to set up an NFSHA-specific domain for this project rather than giving ACHA access to the main campus domain. For example, you may prefer to set up a subdomain like

“NFSHA.northstar.edu” rather than using “northstar.edu.” Your IT department will make this determination.

- Once your IT department confirms what domain they want to use, share that information with your NFSHA Coordinator at ACHA. We’ll then submit a request to activate that domain through our Qualtrics account. Unless you specify otherwise, we’ll submit the request using the default DKIM Selector key ‘qualtrics.’
- Qualtrics will generate specific information that you will share with your IT department to complete the next tasks.
- Once your IT department completes their tasks, ACHA will be able to activate the domain for use in our Qualtrics account. Note that there can be a delay of up to 24 hours between the time the DKIM record is put in place by your IT Team and when the domain will be available for use in the ACHA Qualtrics account.
- Identify the “reply to” address you want associated with your survey invitations. Should it be the same as the “from address?” Will that mailbox be monitored? If not, we can use the default “ACHA\_nationaloffice@acha.org” as the “reply to” address. It’s important you clarify this point with your IT department and your NFSHA Coordinator at ACHA.

Successful adaptation of a custom “from address” for your survey takes time and should involve early communication with your IT department. Please allow at least 2 weeks for domain activation and thorough testing. Customization charges apply. See [order form](#) for details.

Note that the confirmation email that a participant receives after submitting the ACHA-NFSHA survey is always from “Survey Response Thank You <noreply@qemailserver.com>” and cannot be changed.

Upon survey closing, your custom domain will be deactivated from the ACHA Qualtrics account permanently.

## ADDITIONAL DATA DOWNLOADS

**Q: I have access to additional information from the registrar’s office about the participants in my sample. Is it possible to have these data merged with my NFSHA data set for each subject?**

A: Generally, ACHA will not automatically add additional variables to the NFSHA data set. The best way to collect any additional data about the participants that you want included in your NFSHA data is in the form of an extra question added to the end of the survey. (See section on CUSTOMIZING THE SURVEY). This method offers complete transparency to the participant taking the survey.

Excel files sent to ACHA containing participant contact information should include only an email address and a preferred first name (if you’d like your email invitations personalized with first names.) Please be sure to delete any additional participant information from the Excel file before forwarding it to ACHA.

The only condition in which we are willing to pass additional variables through your mailing list to connect with your NFSHA data is 1) if the process is explicitly explained in your IRB application, and 2) it is made clear to the participants in the survey consent that such information is automatically captured about them if they choose to submit a survey. Because this explanation can become lengthy and may actually discourage participants from participating in the survey, it is not recommended.

## COSTS

### **Q: What is the cost of implementing the ACHA-NFSHA Web?**

A: The cost is less for the survey if your school is an ACHA Institutional Member — see the pricing chart at **Please note that prices are subject to change.**

Prices are as follows (ACHA Institutional Member/Non-Member rate):

Up to 5,000 faculty/staff - \$2500/\$3750

5,001 – 10,000 faculty/staff - \$3500/\$5250

10,001 – 20,000 faculty/staff - \$4500/\$6750

20,001 faculty/staff or more - \$5500/\$8250

Community Colleges, HBCU's, and Tribal Colleges qualify for special pricing at \$1500/\$2250 (ACHA Institutional Member/Non-Member rate).

The basic participation fee includes the initial survey invitation, up to 5 reminder messages to non-responders, an automatically generated email confirmation of survey submission, processing of all submissions, and one report package. Additional fees will be applied for additional report packages, additional reminders to non-responders beyond the 5 included in the participation fee, any survey customizations, and extra questions added to the ACHA-NFSHA Web survey.

Please note that there are no discounts given for schools that opt to use a static survey link or opt to do an internal survey process where all participants are contacted by the campus.

## SURVEY RESULTS

### **Q: In what format can I expect to receive my results?**

A: Included in the basic participation fee is Institutional Executive Summary (18 pages of salient results, and computed variables), Institutional Data Report (118 pages of frequency distributions for every variable in the survey for all subjects, and by gender, with a bar graph), and your institutional data (SPSS system file with built in codebook). The report documents are provided in PDF format and are print-ready. As long as all required paperwork has been submitted and the survey invoice has been paid, the PDF report documents, and SPSS raw data file are typically emailed to the campus contact noted on the [order form](#) within 4-6 weeks survey closing.

After the survey period is completed for all schools involved, the Reference Group Executive Summary and Reference Group Data Report for the survey period will be compiled and posted to the ACHA-NFSHA website. Separate Undergraduate and Graduate Reference Group Report Packages will also be generated for each survey period. Campus contacts will be notified directly once the Reference Group report documents for their participation period are posted. Spring Reference Group reports are typically available the October following the survey period, the Fall Reference Group documents are typically available by March of the following year.

### **Q: Is it possible to get extra report packages for a subset of my participants, and if so, how much does it cost?**

A: Many institutions choose to have ACHA generate extra report packages for a subset of their participants (e.g. residents, first-year participants, participants on only one of multiple campuses). Each additional Reports package is \$400 (\$200 each for the Executive Summary and Institutional Report). The non-institutional member price is \$600 (or \$300 per document.) Please contact

Christine Kukich at [ckukich@acha.org](mailto:ckukich@acha.org) if you are interested in purchasing extra reports for your school.

**Q: Is it possible to order a special Reference Group Report Package using participant and/or campus demographic variables that are more relevant to our population?**

A: It may be possible to have ACHA generate special Reference Group Report Packages for a subset of participants (e.g., graduates, undergraduates, residents, first-year participants) and/or a subset of campuses (e.g., 4 year, public, research institutions, with 20,000 or more participants). Whether or not such a request can be accommodated depends on whether or not enough participants or schools meet the criteria you identify. ACHA will not identify data for a specifically requested institution (or group of institutions), nor will we identify the identity of the institutions included in the Reference Group. Each additional Reference Group Reports package is \$400(\$200 each for the Executive Summary and Institutional Report). The non-institutional member price is \$600 (or \$300 per document.) Please contact Christine Kukich at [ckukich@acha.org](mailto:ckukich@acha.org) if you are interested in purchasing extra Reference Group Reports for your school.

**Q: My school is part of a consortium of schools that would like to participate in the ACHA-NFSHA at the same time with the intention of producing a special Reference Group Report that is specific to our group. How can we make this happen?**

A: This is not an unusual request and can be done for a number of different types of groups: by state or other geographic region, by type of institution (e.g., 2-year, Ivy League, Art Schools), or implementation across an institution with multiple campuses. There is no discount available for this sort of ACHA-NFSHA participation – each school will be charged NFSHA fees based on their institutional membership in ACHA. There is an additional charge of \$400 to generate the special Reference Group Report Package for the group. This charge may be added to one school’s invoice or portioned among the participating schools. You must indicate with your NFSHA order if you are participating as part of a multi-campus consortium or group. Each campus must also submit the required ACHA-NFSHA Consortium Agreement document.

**Q: I am working on a grant application and it would be very helpful if I had access to some of our ACHA-NFSHA results before the survey period has closed. Is it possible for me to access preliminary results before the survey is officially closed?**

A: No, access to results requires that ACHA destroy the survey mailing list, which cannot be done during data collection. Results are typically ready 4-6 weeks after the data collection period closes. Please time your data collection so that you have results in time to meet such needs as grant applications and presentation deadlines.

## SPAM FILTERS & RATE CONTROL SYSTEMS

**Q: My school uses rate control systems and spam filters that can intercept and block mass e-mailings from outside organizations. What can we do to prevent our invitations to participate in ACHA-NFSHA from being blocked?**

A: It is important that you work closely with your IT department to try to prevent this problem. Spam filters often look for specific words in the subject line and body of a message in an effort to decrease unsolicited e-mail messages. Avoid using words and phrases commonly used by spammers such as “free,” “discount,” “opportunity,” “money back,” “incredible,” “targeted,” “offer,” and any words or phrases that could be construed as pornographic. These words can trigger a spam filter and prevent the distribution of the messages. Other things to avoid: excessive Caps and punctuation (e.g. PLEASE FILL OUT THIS SURVEY!!!), bright green or red fonts,

and saying “This isn’t spam!” in the subject line. It’s important to test messages against your spam filter before the survey period begins. Rate control filters tend to block messages from a single IP address once a predetermined limit has been exceeded.

Please notify the IT department of your survey plans and let them know your survey dates, the number of participants we will be emailing, and that the invitations to participate will originate from the Qualtrics server [noreply@qemailserver.com](mailto:noreply@qemailserver.com) (IP Ranges: 139.60.152.0/22, 162.247.216.0/22, 192.41.90.160/27, and 66.35.37.96/27). Although the e-mail messages will originate from the Qualtrics server, they will appear to be from [ACHA\\_nationaloffice@acha.org](mailto:ACHA_nationaloffice@acha.org). All Qualtrics IP addresses and both domains (qemailserver.com and acha.org) should be “whitelisted” to prevent the rate control system or spam filter from blocking our invitations. Lastly, the predetermined limit on rate control systems might need to be increased during your survey period. Note that if you are providing ACHA with **personal** participant email addresses (gmail, hotmail, yahoo, etc.) rather than campus addresses, **OR** if you are unable to release participant email addresses to ACHA, whitelisting is not necessary.

## REQUIRED PAPERWORK & ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

### **Q: Why do I need to fill out an Institution of Higher Education Demographic Survey?**

A: All colleges and universities that participate in the ACHA-NFSHA are required to complete a campus demographic survey. A link to your semester’s demographic survey will be sent to you upon survey closing. The demographic survey contains questions specific to your school, such as number of participants, campus location, Basic Carnegie classification, and survey methodology. ACHA uses this information to report on the aggregate dataset from each survey period. As ACHA will not process your school’s dataset or reports until this information is on file, it is recommended that you complete this survey as soon as possible once surveying has commenced. It is recommended that you download a copy of your responses to the demographic survey for your records.

### **Q: Am I required to obtain IRB (Institutional Review Board) approval for conducting the ACHA-NFSHA?**

A: Each surveyor is responsible for securing approval for conducting research involving human subjects from the appropriate campus office, prior to implementing the ACHA-NFSHA. The body that grants approval for such surveys on your campus may be referred to as an Institutional (or Internal) Review Board, Human Subjects Committee, Grant Review Board, Research Review Board, Research Ethics Board or something similar. Institutions will typically fall into one of three categories:

- **IRB indicates that their review/approval is not required for the ACHA-NFSHA.** On many campuses, the IRB has made the determination that the NFSHA does not meet the federal definition of “research” (from 45 CFR 46.102) and is exempt from IRB review. (These campuses would describe the ACHA-NFSHA as a needs assessment or program planning/evaluation tool, rather than “research.”) If your IRB determines that the administration of the ACHA-NFSHA is exempt from IRB review, you will need to submit documentation to this effect, in addition to a letter of administrative approval. The administrative approval letter should be on letterhead from a senior campus administrator (Vice President/Vice Chancellor, Dean of Participants, or equivalent) and 1) stating that the IRB has determined that the ACHA-NFSHA is not research and 2) giving ACHA permission to administer the ACHA-NFSHA to your participants.

- **IRB will determine that the ACHA-NFSHA is research and needs to be reviewed.** Most of the campus IRB's that do consider the ACHA-NFSHA to be research will determine that it is low risk to subjects and qualifies for the "exempt" or "expedited" review categories. A few campuses have determined that the ACHA-NFSHA involves greater than minimal risk to subjects and require a "full" committee review. In any of these cases, a copy of the IRB approval needs to be submitted to ACHA.
- **Institution does not have an IRB.** If your campus does not have an IRB, you must submit a letter of administrative approval. The administrative approval letter should be on letterhead from a senior campus administrator (Vice President/Vice Chancellor, Dean of Participants, or equivalent) and 1) stating that the institution does not have an IRB and 2) giving ACHA permission to administer the ACHA-NFSHA to your participants.

**Q: Can we submit a letter of administrative approval rather than getting IRB approval?**

A: ACHA will only accept a letter of administrative approval in lieu of IRB approval under two circumstances: if your campus does not have an IRB, or if your IRB has determined that the ACHA-NFSHA is not "research." Any letters of administrative approval must state one or the other reasons explicitly.

**Q: What do I need to send to ACHA to implement the NFSHA-Web?**

A: The following materials must be sent to ACHA **at least two weeks** prior to the desired survey launch date:

- The NFSHA [Order form](#).
- An Excel file containing the participant e-mail addresses. If the survey email invitations are to be personalized, please put the preferred first names in the first column of the spreadsheet, the corresponding email address in the second column. Please be sure to select this customization option on your [order form](#). Charges apply.
- The letter of invitation/consent and subject line.
- Your IRB and Administrative approval (if applicable) to survey (including approval of any additional questions).

Please note that if you choose to add additional questions to the ACHA-NFSHA, a final list of questions and all materials listed above must be sent to ACHA **at least three weeks** prior to the desired survey date.

**Q: What is the best way to submit the required documents to the ACHA-NFSHA Program Office?**

A: Once you reach out the ACHA-NFSHA Program Office, you will be assigned a primary contact here at ACHA. Please email all materials directly to your assigned ACHA contact.

**Q: When will I receive my campus ACHA-NFSHA results?**

A: NFSHA results (report documents and SPSS raw data file) are typically ready for schools 4-6 weeks after data collection ends. Results will only be released if the completed Campus Demographic Survey has been submitted via the Qualtrics link and the NFSHA invoice has been paid.



**The following sections of this document discuss options for campuses that are unable to use the standard methodology for implementing the ACHA-NFSHA Web Survey.**

## **INTERNAL SURVEYING**

### **Q. What is an INTERNAL ACHA-NFSHA Survey administration?**

A. The INTERNAL ACHA-NFSHA survey administration is used when a school is prohibited from releasing the participant email addresses to ACHA. In this case, ACHA will provide the school with a file containing the unique survey links and an on-campus survey administrator will distribute the links to the participants. Note that there is no discount in survey pricing when using this methodology – quantity will be based on the number of unique survey URL's assigned to your school.

### **Q. How does an INTERNAL ACHA-NFSHA Survey administration work?**

A. The ACHA-NFSHA Program Office will generate a set of unique survey links (one for each participant contact ordered) with corresponding unique ID numbers and provide this list to the on-campus survey administrator. The on-campus person is responsible for assigning a unique survey link to each participant in the sample and distributing the links to the assigned participant.

When a participant submits survey responses, their corresponding unique ID number will be stored with their survey responses. We will periodically download the submitted data throughout the data collection process to isolate the unique ID numbers that have been used to date. The list of used ID numbers can be used to omit survey responders from the reminder messages going to non-responders. At the end of the data collection period, the list of used ID numbers will also assist in awarding survey incentives. Note that the only info ACHA can provide to the school is the list of unique ID numbers submitted – it's up to the school to maintain the code linking a unique ID and survey link to a particular participant.

*PLEASE NOTE THAT IN THE CASE OF AN INTERNAL NFSHA SURVEY, IT IS IMPORTANT TO TEST THE SURVEY URL DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM PRIOR TO THE SURVEY LAUNCH TO ENSURE THAT THE SURVEY LINKS ARE WORKING PROPERLY AND THE SURVEY SYSTEM IS ACCURATELY DOWNLOADING THE UNIQUE ID NUMBERS WITH SURVEY RESPONSES. IF THE SURVEY URLS ARE NOT PROPERLY INSERTED INTO THE EMAIL INVITATIONS AND TRANSMITTED TO THE PARTICIPANTS, WE WILL BE UNABLE IDENTIFY NON-RESPONDERS AND INCENTIVE WINNERS.*

Detailed instructions for system testing will be provided to all INTERNAL NFSHA surveyors with the unique survey URLs.

### **Q: How can we award incentives if we are using the INTERNAL ACHA-NFSHA survey method?**

A: ACHA will randomly select the number of winners needed from the pool of used unique ID numbers and provide the numbers, in the order they were drawn, to the campus survey coordinator. It's up to the campus survey coordinator to be able to connect an ID number to the corresponding participant. See warning above about the importance of testing the survey links prior to survey launch.

**Q. How does an INTERNAL ACHA-NFSHA survey administration differ from the standard NFSHA methodology?**

A. The INTERNAL survey methodology is in some ways similar and in some ways different than the standard NFSHA methodology.

- The INTERNAL survey methodology is a confidential survey administration and **not anonymous**.
- ACHA staff does not have access to participant email addresses and no participant contact info is stored on ACHA's BOX cloud servers.
- Unlike the standard NFSHA methodology, the INTERNAL survey method requires us to collect identifiable data from the participant. ACHA staff can link a particular set of survey responses to a specific survey URL used to submit those responses.
- The on-campus administrator can link a specific survey URL to a particular participant in the sample.
- Because each participant is provided with a unique survey URL, survey persistence is managed by the Qualtrics server. This means that a participant can access the survey in multiple sessions, from multiple devices and/or browsers – without having to use internet “cookies.”
- Survey participants **will not receive** the auto-generated thank you email message upon survey submission.
- Instead of providing the email addresses of random winners for incentives, ACHA can only provide the randomly selected unique ID numbers. The on-campus survey administrator is responsible for connecting the winning ID number to a particular participant and notifying the incentive winners.
- ACHA will destroy the link between survey responses and a unique survey URL before results are shared with the school. ACHA will not release to the school NFSHA data containing any participant identifiers.

**Q. If no participant contact information is stored at ACHA with the INTERNAL NFSHA methodology, why can't we describe the survey as anonymous?**

A. An anonymous data collection, by definition, is one in which it is impossible to link a particular set of survey responses with the individual that provided the responses. In the case of an INTERNAL NFSHA survey, the ACHA-NFSHA Program Office holds half of the information to identify an individual's responses and the campus holds the other half. While it is against our policy to do so, it is technically possible for ACHA and the school to share information that could facilitate responder identification. We will not do this, but doing so is not impossible, so the INTERNAL survey methodology must be described as confidential.

**Q. The INTERNAL data collection method offers more privacy for the participants than the standard ACHA-NFSHA data collection procedures, right?**

A. Actually, no. When the data is collected using our standard methodology, ACHA uploads the participant email addresses into the Qualtrics system. The Qualtrics system has the ability to track which participants respond so that only non-responders are contacted with survey reminders and incentives can be awarded to survey participants – *without connecting a particular participant to their survey responses*. When using the standard survey methodology, the link between a particular participant and their survey responses is destroyed upon survey submission. This is not the case with an INTERNAL survey implementation.

While ACHA does not have access to participant email addresses in an INTERNAL data collection process, the survey responses must be collected with a unique identifier in order to award

incentives and recontact only non-responders. Though it is our policy not to do so, it would be possible for the campus survey coordinator and the ACHA-NFSHA Program Office to work together to match a particular participant to a particular set of responses. Providing ACHA with the participant email addresses offers BETTER privacy protection to participants with regard to their survey responses, than does the INTERNAL survey method. It's important that schools understand this difference when making these survey implementation decisions.

## ANONYMOUS SURVEYING

### **Q: My school will only permit an anonymous ACHA-NFSHA data collection. Is this an option?**

A. Yes, ACHA can provide an anonymous static survey URL for your campus NFSHA survey effort. However, without using unique survey URLs, ACHA cannot control for multiple submissions from the same participant, cannot prevent submissions from outside your sample, nor can we identify responders to award incentives. While this methodology has been implemented with success, it is not recommended as it introduces a possible source of sampling error not present in the standard NFSHA methodology. In addition, only limited survey persistence can be achieved when using a static survey link by placing a "cookie" on the participant's computer. This will allow a participant to access the survey in multiple sessions, but only from one web browser on one device. Please note that there is no discount in survey pricing when using this methodology – quantity will be based on the size of the campus population.

### **Q: Is it possible to do a random drawing for incentive winners if we are using a static survey link?**

A: There are two ways to address a random drawing for incentives when using a static survey link. You could instruct the participant to print out the generic thank you message that appears in their web browser window upon survey submission (example on page 10), add their contact info to the page, and then submit it somewhere to be entered in a drawing. Note that there is nothing unique about the survey thank-you web page that would identify a specific participant. Multiple copies of the page may be printed or the URL for this page may be shared to extend access to non-participants, so the thank-you page is not really proof of participation and is vulnerable to abuse. Even so, some schools have made the decision to accept the thank-you page as proof of participation to distribute incentives with very little abuse of the system.

Another way to enter participants into a random drawing for incentives is to design your own web page to thank the participant for their participation and to collect their information to enter them in the drawing. Your ACHA-NFSHA survey would be programmed to redirect the participant to your page rather than one of the standard ACHA pages upon survey submission. In this case, the information necessary for the random drawing would be submitted directly to the campus rather than attached to their ACHA-NFSHA responses. Your custom thank-you page must be hosted on a secure server, such that the URL begins with "https://" rather than "http://". This method also has the potential for abuse in that once the NFSHA redirects to the campus website to collect the participant's contact info, the URL for that website can be shared beyond your sample and with participants that did not take the survey. Customization charges apply. See [order form](#) for details.

**Q. How does an ANONYMOUS ACHA-NFSHA Survey administration differ from the standard NFSHA methodology?**

A. The ANONYMOUS survey methodology is in some ways similar and in some ways different than the standard NFSHA methodology.

- The ACHA-NFSHA Program Office cannot assist with awarding incentives to random winners.
- Survey participants will not receive the auto-generated thank you email message upon survey submission.
- With the use of a static URL it is impossible to prevent the survey link from being shared beyond your sample, so data from ANONYMOUS ACHA-NFSHA surveys will not be included in the Reference Group.
- Survey persistence is achieved via a “cookie” placed on the participant’s computer, rather than on the data collection server side. This may present a problem if your IRB will not allow the use of cookies in data collection, or if the participant disables or deletes “cookies” from their computer.
- Preventing a participant from submitting more than one survey may be achieved by the use of another type of “cookie.” As with the persistence cookie, it must be allowed by your IRB, and can be disabled/deleted by the participant, so it is not foolproof protection against multiple submissions from the same participant.
- Because survey persistence is achieved via a “cookie,” the survey is only persistent when using a single web browser on one device.
- The survey must be completed using only one device. It’s not possible to begin the survey on one device and complete it on another.

## CONTACT US

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