

Appendix: 2024 SNAP application experiences survey methodology

From January 1 through January 4, 2024, I fielded an online survey of adult, English-speaking Americans reporting their experiences applying for or receiving benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. I did so by recruiting survey respondents on Meta (Instagram, Facebook, Messenger, Reels, and affiliated Facebook advertisements on other sites), asking for individuals who had experience with the program.

Meta-based recruitment has been used successfully in prior research, including to micro-target beneficiaries of social programs for academic research surveys.¹ I used Meta Pixel to target conversions for survey completion, so that the Meta algorithm would learn to target my advertisements to Meta users who were most likely to be eligible to complete the survey.

The survey was approximately 10 minutes in length and asked respondents about their SNAP application experiences, including barriers and challenges they experienced and how the application experience made them feel. The survey was fielded in English. There were 1,429 respondents who completed the survey. I compensated individuals \$5 in online gift cards for their participation in the study. The Columbia University Institutional Review Board reviewed and approved this survey under Protocol IRB-AAAV0218.

I recruited survey respondents who matched demographic quotas for individuals who had received SNAP benefits in the past 13 years using targets from the Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement on age, education, race, ethnicity, and employment status. Although the final sample closely matched these targets by design, I developed and applied raked survey weights to further ensure that the sample matched CPS targets on age, education, race, ethnicity, employment status, and geographic region.

While not a probability sample, this sample represents a diverse cross-section of individuals with SNAP application experiences who closely match the demographic characteristics of recent SNAP recipients. The table below shows how my sample (weighted and unweighted) compares to the demographic targets in CPS data (using data from 2010–2023 pooled together).

Characteristic	CPS targets (%)	Survey, unweighted (%)	Survey, weighted (%)
<i>Age</i>			
18–44	56.4	71.11	56.4
45–64	29.8	21.98	29.8
65+	13.8	6.9	13.8
<i>Education</i>			
Less than high school	27.3	29.16	27.3
High school	38.6	33.11	38.6
Some college or vocational	25.6	28.95	25.6
B.A. degree or more	8.5	8.78	8.5
<i>Race</i>			
White	65.4	63.14	65.4
Black	25.6	27.01	25.6
Other	9	9.85	9
<i>Ethnicity</i>			
Not Hispanic	75	72.99	75
Hispanic	25	27.01	25
<i>Employment status</i>			
At work	39	40.95	39
Unemployed	8.8	13	8.8
Not in labor force	39.8	38.81	39.8
Retired	12.4	7.24	12.4
<i>Census division</i>			
East North Central	15.4	10.05	15.4
East South Central	7.2	4.36	7.2
Middle Atlantic	12.8	18.3	12.8
Mountain	6.7	10.79	6.7
New England	3.9	4.16	3.9
Pacific	15	18.9	15
South Atlantic	20	19.84	20
West North Central	5.4	4.42	5.4
West South Central	13.6	9.18	13.6

Endnotes

¹ See Daniel Schneider and Kristen Harknett, "Consequences of Routine Work-Schedule Instability for Worker Health and Well-Being," *American Sociological Review* 84 (2019):82–114, available at <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0003122418823184>.