

Tips for Collecting Demographic Data

1. **Always use the wording of the questions provided.** We need to be able to assure that individuals are providing the same information across programs and grantees.
2. **Do not tie the demographic data collection with the evaluation data collection.** One option is to have two return boxes, advising individuals to complete and return demographic information at the beginning of the session in one box, and complete and return the evaluation information at the end of the session, in another box.
3. **It is not appropriate to use observation as the tool to obtain demographic data.** For example, a person may look older or younger than they actually are.
4. **For children or adults with a low literacy rate or who may be learning English as a second language,** you may need to offer the option of filling out demographic forms verbally with a staff member.
5. **You will not need to collect data on individuals you have already collected and reported on for the same program.** For example, if the same group of individuals meets periodically, you will not need to collect and report data on the same individuals for each meeting. Only collect and report data on any new participants to avoid duplicate counts.
6. **If you have individuals that participate in more than one of your programs,** you will need to collect and report data for each different program they participate in. Individuals who participate in more than one program or strategy will be recorded multiple times.
7. In general, **you will not need to collect data on interactions that are not face-to-face,** such as phone conversations or email discussion boards unless they are specific to the activities listed on your implementation plan.
8. **If the program you offer includes child care,** you will not need to count the children as participants unless they actively participate in the program activity. If child care is part of the implementation of the program, be sure to include it as an item in the program's budget.
9. **To collect population-based data, you may need to use the sources listed in the NOMs Information Manual** (see page 8 of the manual). For example, you may be able to use the data that local TV stations or newspapers collect about their circulation. In some instances, you may be able to use the demographic data collected by your local school or supervisory union. Or, in other situations you may want to use census data. To provide accurate census data, use the **Census worksheet** provided by ADAP for your area, either inside or outside Chittenden County.
10. In certain situations, you may not be able to collect 100% of demographic data. We understand this, and we **encourage you to do what you can to obtain it within reason.** If you have tried and still are unable to collect the data, you may list the numbers in the unknown categories.
11. **After you record and report on the data, you may want to keep the data collections forms** throughout the grant year in case your grant manager has questions during their review of the information (note: you are not required to keep these forms after submitting the information in your grant reports). Be sure not to keep demographic information together with names, addresses, or anything in a manner that can lead to the identification of an individual person.

If you have any questions on the process of collecting or reporting NOMs data, contact your grant manager or Megan Trutor at megan.trutor@ahs.state.vt.us or at 802-652-4150.