

# State Bar of California Legal Malpractice 2018

Conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago for the State Bar of California

*Interviews: 11/26-12/11/2018  
1038 adults*

*Margin of error:  
4.17 percentage points at the 95% confidence level among all California adults*

*NOTE: All results show percentages among all respondents, unless otherwise labeled.*

*"\*" indicates less than 0.5%*

*"-" indicates 0%*

**Q1. First, have you or someone in your household ever experienced a situation where a lawyer was needed?**

**[MULTIPLE RESPONSES]**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
Yes, myself	48
Yes, someone in my household	30
No	31
DON'T KNOW/SKIPPED ON WEB/REFUSED	*

*N=1038*

*If "Yes, myself" or "Yes, someone else in my household" at Q1*

**Q2. What was the most recent reason [you/someone in your household] needed a lawyer?**

**[OPEN END RESPONSE]**

*If "Yes, myself" or "Yes, someone else in my household" at Q1*

**Q3. Thinking about the most recent time [you/someone in your household] needed a lawyer, which of the following actions did [you/they] take? If [you/they] took no action you can say that too.**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
[Handled on my own/They handled it on their own]	7
Consulted a lawyer but did not hire them	18
Hired a lawyer	68
Consulted a non-legal third party	3
Took no action	4
DON'T KNOW/SKIPPED ON WEB/REFUSED	*

*N=745*

*If “Consulted a lawyer but did not hire them” or “Hired a lawyer” at QS3*

**Q4. How did [you find a/they find a] lawyer or other legal service?**

**[MULTIPLE RESPONSES]**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
Asked family and friends	53
Through a lawyer referral service	15
Used search engines like Google or Bing	19
Through social media platforms like Twitter/Facebook/Instagram/ LinkedIn/NextDoor	2
Searched the State Bar of California website	5
Searched other websites	5
Searched the Yellow Pages	5
Got a recommendation from [my/their] co-worker or employer	8
Got a recommendation from a union [I/they] belong to	1
Got a recommendation from a club or social group [I/they] belong to	3
Advertising on television, radio, or other media	4
Other	17
DON'T KNOW/SKIPPED ON WEB/REFUSED	-

N=652

**Q5. [When you consulted with or chose to hire a lawyer/Suppose you needed to hire a lawyer], how important [would/were] each of the following factors [be] in making your choice?**

NORC 11/26-12/11/2018	Not important at all	Slightly important	Moderately important	Very important	Extremely important	DK/SKP /REF
Cost	3	8	22	38	29	1
Experience	1	3	10	44	42	1
Reputation	3	4	14	42	37	1
The information the lawyer presents on their website	14	15	28	25	15	2
That they have legal malpractice insurance	10	14	23	32	20	1
That they are close to my house or office	13	23	37	20	7	1
That they were available during times convenient to me	4	11	28	37	19	1
That the referral came from a lawyer referral service	30	20	26	16	8	1
The reviews online or on social media	19	20	27	22	11	1
That I know them personally	46	17	19	12	6	1
That someone I know has hired or recommended them	12	16	26	32	13	1
The information about the lawyer on the State Bar of California website	11	12	25	33	17	2
Advertisements about the lawyer	37	24	24	9	4	2
That the lawyer specializes in a certain area of law	2	5	19	44	29	2

N= 1038

**Q6. For each of the following terms, please choose which statement most accurately describes your understanding of that term.**

NORC 11/26-12/11/2018	I have never heard this term	I have heard this term but do not know what it means	I have heard this term and know what it means	DK/SKP /REF
Legal malpractice insurance	12	28	59	*
Professional liability insurance	20	32	47	1
Retainer fees and/or agreements	11	22	67	1
Contingency fees	18	37	44	1
Attorney client privilege	12	17	71	1
Conflict of interest	6	11	82	1
Bar licensing	10	17	72	1

N= 1038

**Q7. Based on what you know, are all lawyers currently required to have legal malpractice insurance in order to practice law in the state of California, or not?**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
Yes, it is currently required	23
No, it is not currently required	10
Not sure/don't know	65
DON'T KNOW/SKIPPED ON WEB/REFUSED	1

*N=1038*

**Q8. If lawyers do not have legal malpractice insurance, should they be required to disclose that information to potential clients, or not?**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
Yes, should be required	86
No, should not be required	12
DON'T KNOW/SKIPPED ON WEB/REFUSED	2

*N=1038*

*If "Yes, should be required" at Q8*

**Q9. When should the lawyer disclose that they do not have legal malpractice insurance?**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
Before the client decides to hire them	84
At the time the client decides to hire them	15
DON'T KNOW/SKIPPED ON WEB/REFUSED	*

*N=902*

**Q10. Do you think the State Bar of California website should include information about whether each lawyer has legal malpractice insurance, or not?**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
Yes	89
No	10
DON'T KNOW/SKIPPED ON WEB/REFUSED	1

*N=1038*

**Q11. Do you think all lawyers should be required to have legal malpractice insurance in order to practice law in California, or not?**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
Yes, should be required	78
No, should not be required	21
DON'T KNOW/SKIPPED ON WEB/REFUSED	1

N=1038

*If "Yes, should be required" at Q11*

**Q12. Lawyers who have legal malpractice insurance may charge higher fees to clients, to cover the cost of their insurance premiums. Given this information, do you think all lawyers should be required to have legal malpractice insurance in order to practice law in California?**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
Yes, should be required	86
No, should not be required	13
DON'T KNOW/SKIPPED ON WEB/REFUSED	1

N=787

**Q13. Suppose a proposal was on the ballot to require California lawyers to have legal malpractice insurance. If this proposal passed, on average lawyers would increase their hourly fees by [\$10/\$20/\$30/\$40/\$50]. Would you vote favor or against such a proposal to require legal malpractice insurance?**

**[RESPONSE OPTIONS ROTATED]**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
Vote in favor	57
Vote against	41
DON'T KNOW/SKIPPED ON WEB/REFUSED	2

N=1038

*If "Working – as a paid employee" or "Working – self-employed" at EMPLOY*

**Q14. Are you employed full-time or part-time?**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
Full-time	75
Part-time	23
DON'T KNOW/SKIPPED ON WEB/REFUSED	2

N=610

*If “Working – as a paid employee” or “Working – self-employed” at EMPLOY*

**Q15. Would you say your job is a white collar job, a blue collar job, or something else?**

**White collar work is usually done in an office or other professional environment. Blue collar refers to jobs that involve manual labor.**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
White collar	55
Blue collar	27
Something else	17
DON'T KNOW/SKIPPED ON WEB/REFUSED	1

*N=610*

**Q16. Are you or is anyone in your household a lawyer or work for a lawyer?**

**[MULTIPLE RESPONSES]**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
Yes, I am a lawyer	1
Yes, someone else in the household is a lawyer	5
Yes, I work for a lawyer	2
Yes, someone else in the household works for a lawyer	1
No one in the household is a lawyer or works for a lawyer	92
DON'T KNOW/SKIPPED ON WEB/REFUSED	1

*N=1038*

**SURV\_LANG. Survey interview language**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
English	93
Spanish	7

*N=1038*

**SURV\_MODE. Survey interview mode**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
Online	89
Phone	11

*N=1038*

**DEVICE. Device**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
Desktop	35
Phone Interview (not online)	11
Smartphone	50
Tablet	5

*N=1038*

**GENDER. Gender**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
Male	49
Female	51

*N=1038*

**AGE4. Age – 4 categories**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
18-29	22
30-44	28
45-59	24
60+	26

*N=1038*

**AGE7. Age – 7 categories**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
18-24	12
25-34	20
35-44	19
45-54	14
55-64	17
65-74	12
75+	6

*N=1038*



**RACETHNICITY. Combined race/ethnicity**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
White, non-Hispanic	41
Black, non-Hispanic	6
Other, non-Hispanic	2
Hispanic	35
2+, non-Hispanic	5
Asian, non-Hispanic	12

*N=1038*

**EDUC. Education (highest degree received)**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
No formal education	1
1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> , or 4 <sup>th</sup> grade	*
5 <sup>th</sup> or 6 <sup>th</sup> grade	2
7 <sup>th</sup> or 8 <sup>th</sup> grade	1
9 <sup>th</sup> grade	1
10 <sup>th</sup> grade	1
11 <sup>th</sup> grade	3
12 <sup>th</sup> grade, no diploma	5
High school graduate – high school diploma or equivalent (GED)	23
Some college, no degree	21
Associate degree	8
Bachelor's degree	20
Master's degree	9
Professional or doctorate degree	4

*N=1038*

**EDUC4. 4-level education**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
No high school diploma	14
High school graduate or equivalent	23
Some college	29
Bachelor's degree or above	34

*N=1038*

**Marit. Are you...**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
Married	45
Widowed	4
Divorced	12
Separated	2
Never married	26
Living with partner	11

*N=1038*

**Emp. Which statement best describes your current employment status?**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
<b>Working (NET)</b>	<b>59</b>
Working – as a paid employee	47
Working – self-employed	12
<b>Not working (NET)</b>	<b>41</b>
Not working – on temporary layoff from a job	1
Not working – looking for work	8
Not working – retired	16
Not working – disabled	8
Not working – other	9

*N=1038*

**INCOME. Household income**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
<b>Less than \$50,000 (NET)</b>	<b>42</b>
Less than \$5,000	4
\$5,000 to \$9,999	3
\$10,000 to \$14,999	5
\$15,000 to \$19,999	5
\$20,000 to \$24,999	6
\$25,000 to \$29,999	4
\$30,000 to \$34,999	6
\$35,000 to \$39,999	3
\$40,000 to \$49,999	6
<b>\$50,000 or more (NET)</b>	<b>58</b>
\$50,000 to \$59,999	8
\$60,000 to \$74,999	10
\$75,000 to \$84,999	6
\$85,000 to \$99,999	10
\$100,000 to \$124,999	9
\$125,000 to \$149,999	6
\$150,000 to \$174,999	3
\$175,000 to \$199,999	2
\$200,000 or more	5

*N=1038*

**REGION9. Region – 9 level**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
New England	-
Mid-Atlantic	-
East North Central	-
West North Central	-
South Atlantic	-
East South Central	-
West South Central	-
Mountain	-
Pacific	100

*N=1038*

**REGION4. Region – 4 level**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
Northeast	-
Midwest	-
South	-
West	100

*N=1038*

**METRO. Metropolitan area flag**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
Non-metro area	2
Metro area	98

*N=1038*

**INTERNET. Household internet access**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
Non-internet household	16
Internet household	84

*N=1038*

**HOUSING. Home ownership**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
Owned or being bought by you or someone in your household	57
Rented for cash	40
Occupied without payment of cash rent	2

*N=1038*

**HOME\_TYPE. Type of building of panelists' residence**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
A one-family house detached from any other house	63
A one-family house attached to one or more houses	9
A building with 2 or more apartments	24
A mobile home or trailer	4
Boat, RV, van, etc.	*

*N=1038*

**PHONESERVICE. Telephone service for the household**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
Landline telephone only	5
Have a landline, but mostly use cellphone	27
Have a cellphone, but mostly use landline	12
Cellphone only	55
No telephone service	1

*N=1038*

**HHSIZE. Household size (including children)**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
1	17
2	28
3	13
4	15
5	9
6+	18

*N=1038*

**HH01. Number of HH members age 0-1**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
0	97
1	3
2	*

*N=1038*

**HH25. Number of HH members age 2-5**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
0	85
1	9
2	5
3	*
4	*

*N=1038*

**HH612. Number of HH members age 6-12**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
0	79
1	12
2	7
3	1
4	1
5	*
6	*
7	-
8	*

*N=1038*

**HH1317. Number of HH members age 13-17**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
0	81
1	13
2	5
3	*
4	1

*N=1038*

**HH18OV. Number of HH members age 18+**

	NORC 11/26-12/11/2018
1	21
2	43
3	16
4	8
5	8
6	1
7	1
8	*
9	*
10	*

*N=1038*

**LEGAL MALPRACTICE 2018  
CALIFORNIA STATE BAR  
AMERISPEAK FIELD REPORT**

December 13, 2018

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## STUDY INTRODUCTION

NORC conducted the Legal Malpractice 2018 survey on behalf of the State Bar of California using NORC's AmeriSpeak® Panel for the sample source. This research was done to investigate California residents knowledge and experience of the legal system, with an emphasis on knowledge of legal malpractice insurance.

This study was offered in English and Spanish. The survey was administered on web and phone.

This AmeriSpeak Field Report supplements the information provided in the *NORC Card*, which provides an in-depth profile of sample quality metrics for the study, the data collection field period, interview sample size, response rate statistics, the design effect, and sampling margins of error, among other statistics. Please refer to the NORC Card for information useful for compliance with the AAPOR Transparency Initiative, in addition to information provided in this AmeriSpeak Field Report.

For more detailed information on the AmeriSpeak panel recruitment and management methodology, please see the Appendix ("Technical Notes on AmeriSpeak Methodology") attached to this AmeriSpeak Field Report.

## STUDY-SPECIFIC DETAILS

### Sampling

A general population sample of California residents age 18 and older was selected from NORC's AmeriSpeak Panel for this study.

The sample for a specific study is selected from the AmeriSpeak Panel using sampling strata based on age, race/Hispanic ethnicity, education, and gender (48 sampling strata in total). The size of the selected sample per sampling stratum is determined by the population distribution for each stratum. In addition, sample selection takes into account expected differential survey completion rates by demographic groups so that the set of panel members with a completed interview for a study is a representative sample of the target population. If panel household has one more than one active adult panel member, only one adult in the household is eligible for selection (random within-household sampling). Panelists selected for an AmeriSpeak study earlier in the business week are not eligible for sample selection until the following business week.

For technical information about the AmeriSpeak Panel, including recruitment process and panel management policies, please see the Appendix.

### Field

Initially, a recruitment survey was fielded to attain a list of respondents who consented to cognitive interviews. Using this list, respondents were contacted, of which 9 completed cognitive interviews. These were then used to refine the content of the pretest.

A small sample of English-speaking AmeriSpeak web-mode panelists were invited on November 16, 2018 for a pretest. In total, NORC collected 25 pretest interviews. The initial data from the pretest was reviewed by NORC and a delivered to The State Bar of California.

No changes were made before fielding the Main survey to collect the 1,038 interviews.

Please see NORC Card for field period, sample sizes, and the AAPOR response rate documentation.

### Survey Completion Rates

The interview stage of data collection was conducted during a single survey session for the respondents. The incidence rate was 100.0%. Among those cases that entered the main study interview, the interview completion rate was 26.6%. The summary statistics on sample performance are shown below.

#### Sample Performance Summary

Sampled/Invited Panelists	Incidence / Eligibility Rate	No. Survey Interviews Completed	Interview Completion Rate
3,899	100.0%	1,038	26.6%

Please see NORC Card for the AAPOR response rate documentation.

### Gaining Cooperation of AmeriSpeak Panelists for the Study

To encourage study cooperation, NORC sent email reminders to sampled web-mode panelists on the following dates:

- Thursday November 29
- Saturday December 1
- Tuesday December 4
- Friday December 7
- Sunday December 9

Panelists were offered the cash equivalent of \$4.

### Data processing

NORC prepared a fully labeled data file of respondent survey data and demographic data for The State Bar of California.

### Statistical Weighting

Statistical weights for the study eligible respondents were calculated using *panel base sampling weights* to start.

*Panel base sampling weights* for all sampled housing units are computed as the inverse of probability of selection from the NORC National Frame (the sampling frame that is used to sample housing units for AmeriSpeak) or address-based sample. The sample design and recruitment protocol for the AmeriSpeak Panel involves subsampling of initial non-respondent housing units. These subsampled non-respondent housing units are selected for an in-person follow-up. The subsample of housing units that are selected for the nonresponse follow-up (NRFU) have their panel base sampling weights inflated by the inverse of the subsampling rate. The base sampling weights are further adjusted to account for unknown eligibility and nonresponse among eligible housing units. The household-level nonresponse adjusted weights are then post-stratified to external counts for number of households obtained from the Current Population Survey. Then, these household-level post-stratified weights are assigned to each eligible adult in every recruited household. Furthermore, a person-level nonresponse adjustment accounts for nonresponding adults within a recruited household.

Finally, panel weights are raked to external population totals associated with age, sex, education, race/Hispanic ethnicity, housing tenure, telephone status, and Census Division. The external population

totals are obtained from the Current Population Survey. The weights adjusted to the external population totals are the *final panel weights*.

*Study-specific base sampling weights* are derived using a combination of the final panel weight and the probability of selection associated with the sampled panel member. Since not all sampled panel members respond to the survey interview, an adjustment is needed to account for and adjust for survey non-respondents. This adjustment decreases potential nonresponse bias associated with sampled panel members who did not complete the survey interview for the study. Thus, the *nonresponse adjusted survey weights* for the study are adjusted via a raking ratio method to 18+ year old California resident population totals associated with the following socio-demographic characteristics: age, sex, education, race/Hispanic ethnicity, and Census Division. The weights adjusted to the external population totals are the *final study weights*.

At the final stage of weighting, any extreme weights were trimmed based on a criterion of minimizing the mean squared error associated with key survey estimates, and then, weights re-raked to the same population totals.

Raking and re-raking is done during the weighting process such that the weighted demographic distribution of the survey completes resemble the demographic distribution in the target population. The assumption is that the key survey items are related to the demographics. Therefore, by aligning the survey respondent demographics with the target population, the key survey items should also be in closer alignment with the target population.

### Deliverables

The following files were created for The State Bar of California as part of the study deliverables:

- Survey interview data file in Excel format
- Topline frequencies in Word format
- Codebook in Excel format
- Final programming questionnaire in Word document
- Field report documenting study procedures
- NORC Card

### HOW TO DESCRIBE AMERISPEAK AND NORC @ THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

For purposes of publication, when describing AmeriSpeak and its panel methodology, we recommend using the following language:

Funded and operated by NORC at the University of Chicago, **AmeriSpeak®** is a probability-based panel designed to be representative of the US household population. Randomly selected US households are sampled using area probability and address-based sampling, with a known, non-zero probability of selection from the NORC National Sample Frame. These sampled households are then contacted by US mail, telephone, and field interviewers (face to face). The panel provides sample coverage of approximately 97% of the U.S. household population. Those excluded from the sample include people with P.O. Box only addresses, some addresses not listed in the USPS Delivery Sequence File, and some newly constructed dwellings. While most AmeriSpeak households participate in surveys by web, non-internet households can participate in AmeriSpeak surveys by telephone. Households without conventional internet access but having web access via smartphones are allowed to participate in AmeriSpeak surveys by web. AmeriSpeak panelists participate in NORC studies or studies conducted by NORC on behalf of governmental agencies, academic researchers, and media and commercial organizations.

For more information, email [AmeriSpeak-BD@norc.org](mailto:AmeriSpeak-BD@norc.org) or visit [AmeriSpeak.norc.org](http://AmeriSpeak.norc.org).

If editors or reviewers are requesting anything more specific or any other detail, please reach out to us to make certain you are using accurate language.

NORC at the University of Chicago is best described as follows:

**NORC at the University of Chicago** is an independent research institution that delivers reliable data and rigorous analysis to guide critical programmatic, business, and policy decisions. Since 1941, NORC has conducted groundbreaking studies, created and applied innovative methods and tools, and advanced principles of scientific integrity and collaboration. Today, government, corporate, and nonprofit clients around the world partner with NORC to transform increasingly complex information into useful knowledge. Please visit [www.norc.org](http://www.norc.org) for more information.

## APPENDIX

# TECHNICAL OVERVIEW OF THE AMERISPEAK® PANEL NORC'S PROBABILITY-BASED RESEARCH PANEL

Updated February 6, 2018

Prepared by J. Michael Dennis, Ph.D.

Funded and operated by NORC at the University of Chicago, AmeriSpeak® is a probability-based panel designed to be representative of the US household population. Randomly selected US households are sampled with a known, non-zero probability of selection from the NORC National Frame and address-based sample, and then contacted by US mail, telephone interviewers, overnight express mailers, and field interviewers (face to face). AmeriSpeak panelists participate in NORC studies or studies conducted by NORC on behalf of NORC's clients.

In 2017, the AmeriSpeak Panel expanded to 27,000 households and will expand to 30,000 households in 2018. The AmeriSpeak Panel includes sample support for surveys of various segments through AmeriSpeak Latino, AmeriSpeak Teen, and AmeriSpeak Young Adult (which includes an oversample of African Americans, Hispanics, and Asians age 18-34). AmeriSpeak also supports large-sample size surveys and surveys of low-incidence populations through AmeriSpeak Calibration, which combines probability-based AmeriSpeak and non-probability online samples using calibrating statistical weights derived from AmeriSpeak.

### Sample Frame

In order to provide a nationally representative sample, AmeriSpeak leverages the NORC National Frame, which provides sample coverage for over 97 percent of the U.S. households. The 2010 National Frame used a two-stage probability sample design to select a representative sample of households in the United States. The first stage—the sampling unit—is a National Frame Area (NFA), which is either an entire metropolitan area (made up of one or more counties) or a county (some counties were combined so that each NFA contains a population of at least 10,000). The largest NFAs with a population of at least 1,543,728 (0.5 percent of the 2010 Census U.S. population) were selected with certainty; these areas have a high-population density, and are dominated by tracts with street-style addresses. These areas contain 56 percent of the population within 8 percent of the geographic area of the United States. The remaining areas were stratified into areas where street-style addresses predominate, and the remaining areas, which are less likely to have street-style addresses. The latter stratum (“rural” areas) comprises 81 percent of the geographic area, but only 14 percent of the population.

Within the selected NFAs, the second stage sampling unit is a segment, defined either in terms of Census tracts or block groups, containing at least 300 housing units according to the 2010 Census. A stratified probability sample of 1,514 segments was selected with probability proportional to size. For most of the 1,514 segments, the U.S. Postal Service Delivery Sequence File (DSF) provided over 90 percent coverage of the segments in terms of city-style addresses that are geo-codeable. For the 123 segments where the DSF provided insufficient coverage, we enhanced the DSF address list with in-person listing. The National Frame contains almost 3 million households, including over 80,000 rural households added through the in-person listing.

The National Frame involves addresses in almost every state. For the remaining states, AmeriSpeak added some address-based sampling (ABS) addresses in 2016 and 2017 from the USPS DSF to assure AmeriSpeak sample representation for all US States and Washington, DC.

In 2017, a targeted address-based sample was added to AmeriSpeak recruitment in order to develop a new Latino Panel with adequate representation of Spanish-language-dominant Hispanics. Census tracts with high incidence (at least 30%) of Spanish-dominant Hispanics were targeted for this recruitment. Furthermore, within these Census tracts, households that were flagged as Hispanic based on consumer vendor data (that are typically used for direct-mail marketing) were oversampled. This new AmeriSpeak Latino Panel contains approximately 5,400 Hispanic panelists with 24% of those panelists being Spanish-language dominant. As of August 2017, 13% of AmeriSpeak Panel (including the Latino Panel) recruited adults were sourced from the ABS and 87% from the National Frame. Proper weights allow the full use of the combined sample.

### **Sample Selection for Panel Recruitment**

The 2014-2017 AmeriSpeak Panel sample consists of nationally representative housing units drawn from the 2010 NORC National Sample Frame and 14% from address-based sampling (which was primarily to develop AmeriSpeak Latino). The 2010 NORC National Sample Frame is stratified based on segment (Census tract or Census block group) characteristics such as age and race/ethnicity composition of the segment, and then, a stratified simple random sample of housing units is selected. Specifically, based on Census tract-level data, segments were classified as having a higher concentration of 18-24 year old adults or not, and a higher concentration of Hispanics, non-Hispanic African Americans, and other. Based on these strata definitions, 6 strata (2 based on age times 3 based on race/ethnicity) were used to oversample housing units in segments higher in young adults and/or Hispanics and non-Hispanic African-Americans. This is referred to as the initial sample or first stage of panel recruitment.

In the second stage of panel recruitment, initially sampled but nonresponding housing units are subsampled for a nonresponse follow-up (NRFU). At this stage, consumer vendor data are matched to housing units, and housing units that are flagged (based on consumer vendor data) as having a young adult (18-34 years of age) or minority (Hispanic and non-Hispanic African American) are oversampled for the NRFU. Overall, approximately one in five initially nonresponding housing units are subsampled for NRFU. However, as mentioned previously, selection of housing units for NRFU is a stratified simple random sample based on consumer vendor data. Due to NRFU, these initially nonresponding housing units have a much higher selection probability compared to the housing units that were recruited during the first stage of panel recruitment. Note that a small fraction of initially nonresponding housing units are not eligible for NRFU due to these housing units being classified as “hard refusals” or having an appointment for a call back from NORC.

In summary, there are two reasons why the sampling design for AmeriSpeak Panel recruitment deviates from Equal Probability of Selection Method (EPSEM) sampling: (a) oversampling of housing units in segments with a higher concentration of young adults and minorities results in the sample selection probabilities being higher for housing units in these segments; and (b) the nonresponse follow-up effort results in initially nonresponding housing units having a much higher selection probability. Furthermore, oversampling associated with NRFU results in higher selection probabilities for initially nonresponding housing units that are flagged (based on consumer vendor data) as having a young adult or minority.

### **AmeriSpeak Panel Recruitment Procedures**

Recruitment is a two-stage process: initial recruitment using less expensive methods and then non-response follow-up using personal interviewers. For the initial recruitment, sample units are invited to join AmeriSpeak online by visiting the panel website [AmeriSpeak.org](http://AmeriSpeak.org) or by telephone (in-bound/outbound supported). English and Spanish language are supported for both online and telephone recruitment. Study invitations are communicated via an over-sized pre-notification postcard, a USPS recruitment package in a 9”x12” envelope (containing a cover letter, a summary of the privacy policy, FAQs, and a study brochure), two follow-up post cards, and also contact by NORC’s telephone research center for sample units matched to a telephone number.



The second-stage non-response follow-up targets a stratified random sub-sample of the non-responders from the initial recruitment. Stratification is based on consumer vendor data and stratification variables from the initial recruitment stage in order to increase sample representation of young adults (18-34 years of age), non-Hispanic African Americans, and Hispanics. Units sampled for the non-response follow-up are sent by Federal Express a new recruitment package with an enhanced incentive offer. NORC field interviewers then make personal, face-to-face visits to the respondents' homes to encourage participation. NORC field interviewers administer the recruitment survey in-person using CAPI or else encourage the respondents to register at AmeriSpeak.org or call the toll-free AmeriSpeak telephone number to register.

### **Recruiting Non-Internet and “Net Averse” Households**

Under certain conditions, AmeriSpeak gives respondents a choice regarding their preferred mode for future participation in AmeriSpeak surveys. For the 2014-2017 recruitment, 82% of panelists were enrolled in AmeriSpeak to receive online surveys, while 18% of the panelists agreed to participate in AmeriSpeak telephone mode surveys. For the 2016 and 2017 recruitment, respondents provided an option of online or telephone modes include: persons without internet access, persons whose only internet access is via a smartphone, and persons with internet access but unwilling to share an email address. A recruited household can consist of both web-mode and phone-mode panelists residing in the same household.

### **Impact of Non-Response Follow-up**

The non-response follow-up (NRFU) reduces non-response bias significantly by improving the representativeness of the AmeriSpeak panel sample with respect to certain demographic segments, including but not limited to rural and/or lower income households, cell-phone only households, persons age 18 to 34, African Americans, Hispanics, and persons without a high school degree or have only a high school degree (no college). Even though NRFU panelists are more reluctant to complete surveys, the addition of NRFU panelists reduced absolute bias on average 35-40% when compared to the initial stage recruits (among examined surveys). Compared to panelists recruited in the initial stage, panelists recruited via the non-response follow-up campaign are more politically conservative, are less knowledgeable about science, report less interest in current events and topics in the news (such as climate change and energy resources), and are less likely to read a print newspaper (more likely to read the news online and use social media). They are also more likely to attend church, be against gun control, and more likely to eat at a fast food restaurant than the initial stage recruits. Accordingly, NRFU panelists make the substantive estimates in any AmeriSpeak study more representative and accurate.

### **AmeriSpeak Panel Recruitment Response Rate and Other Sample Metrics**

The AAPOR RR3 (response rate) for the 2014-2017 panel recruitment 33.7% (weighted to take into account selection probabilities).<sup>1</sup> The estimated cumulative AAPOR RR3 for client surveys is 10% to 20% (varying according to study parameters and taking into account all sources of non-response including panel recruitment, panel household attrition, and survey participation).<sup>2</sup> NORC documented the AAPOR response rate calculation methodology for 2014-2015 recruitment.<sup>3</sup>

Key statistics with respect to the 2014-2017 recruited households are as follows: 52% recruited via the non-response follow-up recruitment using overnight Federal Express mailers and face-to-face methodology (with

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<sup>1</sup> The response rate calculation incorporates the selection probabilities of the samples for the initial recruitment and non-response follow-up stages, as calculated by the US Bureau of the Census for the American Community Survey.

<sup>2</sup> A properly calculated AAPOR response rate for panel-based research takes into account all sources of non-response at each stage of the panel recruitment, management, and survey administration process. A common misapplication of the term “response rate” in online panel surveys is represent the survey-specific cooperation rate as the “survey response rate.”

<sup>3</sup> See “Response Rate Calculation Methodology for Recruitment of a Two-Phase Probability-Based Panel: The Case of AmeriSpeak” authored by Robert Montgomery, J. Michael Dennis, Nada Ganesh. The paper is available at [amerispeak.norc.org](http://amerispeak.norc.org) on the “research” page.

NORC field staff visiting households); 18% indicated a preference for the telephone mode of data collection for participating in AmeriSpeak studies; 22% of the recruited households are non-Internet; 80% are cell-phone only or cell-phone mostly; 18% are African-American and 24% Hispanic; and 36% have household income below \$30,000 (compared to CPS benchmark of 26%).

### **Mixed-Mode Data Collection**

Panelists may participate in two to three AmeriSpeak Panel studies per month via online (computer, tablet, or smartphones) or by CATI phone. CATI phone mode respondents represent a population currently under-represented in web panels that exclude non-internet households or “net averse” persons. NORC’s telephone interviewers administer the phone mode of survey questionnaires using a data collection system supporting both the phone and web modes of data collection, providing an integrated sample management and data collection platform. For panelists using smartphones for web-mode AmeriSpeak surveys, the NORC survey system renders an optimized presentation of the survey questions for these mobile users. For general population client studies, approximately 20% of the completed interviews are completed by the telephone mode.

### **Panel Management Policies**

NORC maintains strict rules to limit respondent burden and reduce the risk of panel fatigue. On average, AmeriSpeak panel members typically participate in AmeriSpeak web-based or phone-based studies two to three times a month.

Because the risk of panel attrition increases with the fielding of poorly constructed survey questionnaires, the AmeriSpeak team works with NORC clients to create surveys that provide an appropriate user experience for AmeriSpeak panelists. AmeriSpeak will not field surveys that in our professional opinion will result in a poor user experience for our panelists and in panel attrition.

## **ABOUT NORC AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO**

As one of the world’s foremost independent research institutions, NORC at the University of Chicago delivers objective data and meaningful analysis to help decision-makers and leading organizations make informed choices and identify new opportunities. Since 1941, NORC has applied sophisticated methods and tools, innovative and cost-effective solutions, and the highest standards of scientific integrity and quality to conduct and advance research on critical issues. Today, NORC expands on this tradition by partnering with government, business, and nonprofit clients to create deep insight across a broad range of topics and to disseminate useful knowledge throughout society.

Headquartered in downtown Chicago, NORC works in over 40 countries around the world, with additional offices on the University of Chicago campus, the DC metro area, Atlanta, Boston, and San Francisco.

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

To learn more about AmeriSpeak or to share an RFP, please contact AmeriSpeak at [AmeriSpeak-BD@norc.org](mailto:AmeriSpeak-BD@norc.org). Information about AmeriSpeak capabilities and research papers are available online at [AmeriSpeak.NORC.org](http://AmeriSpeak.NORC.org).