

Overview of Telephone Interviewing for National Health Interview Survey, April – December 2020

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About the NHIS

- The National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) is a health survey sponsored by the National Center for Health Statistics, part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- It is an in-person household survey
- The survey sample is address-based

Initial Contact by Phone

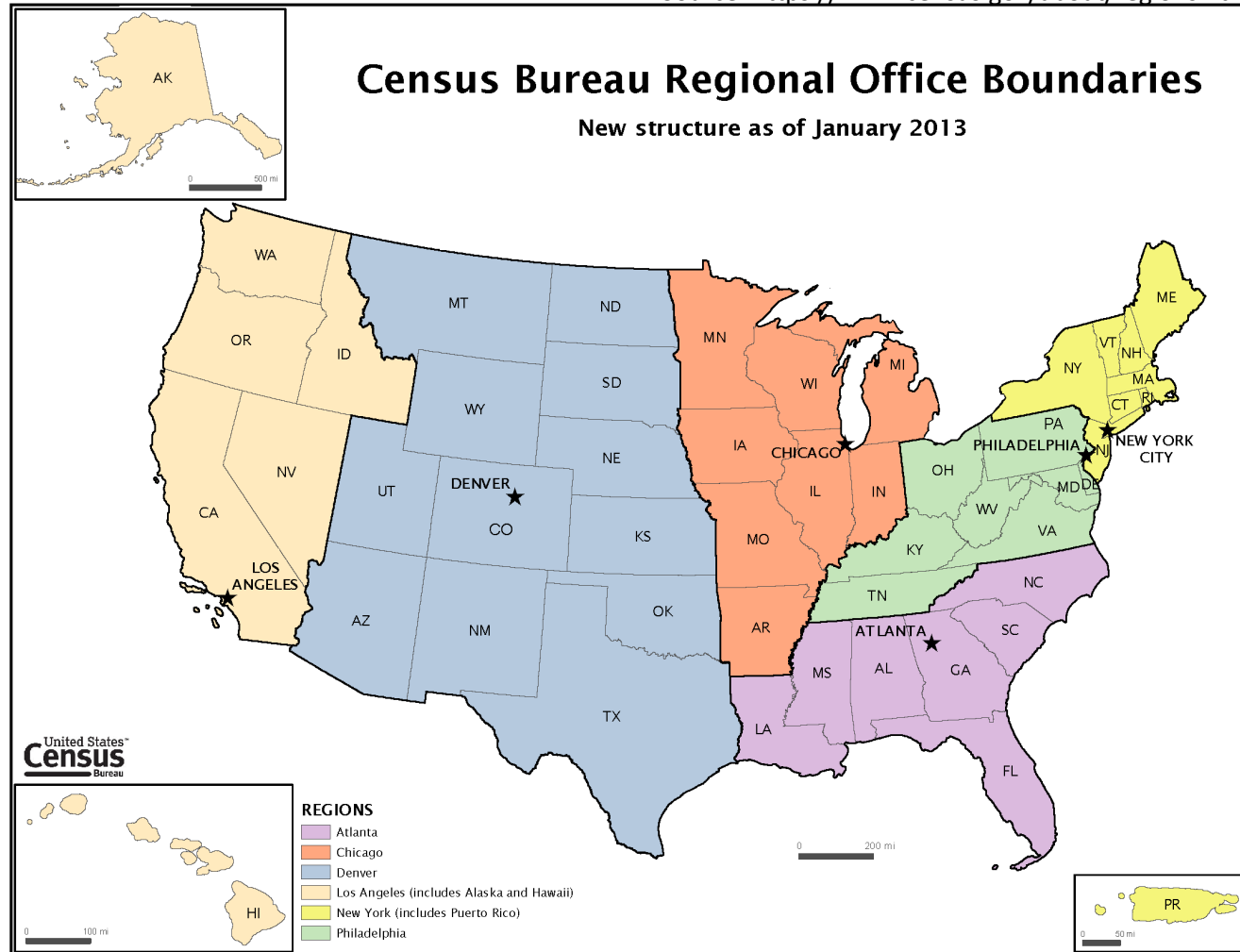
- NHIS moved to phone-only interviewing in late March 2020 and began making Personal Visits again later in the year
- Agency directive through June, then phased back to in-person depending on the conditions of the area
- Of NHIS households where contact was made with a Sample Unit member in April-December 2020, the initial contact was by phone for 79.7% of these cases
 - 99.8% in Quarter 2 (April – June)
 - 80.4% in Quarter 3 (July – September)
 - 43.6% in Quarter 4 (October – December)

Phone contacts resulting in completed interviews

- According to contact history data, 68.9% of completed interviews and sufficient partials in April-December 2020 were with no Personal Visits made
 - Less than 1% for the same period in 2019
- In April-December 2020, households with no phone numbers:
 - Made up ~70% of non-completed interviews
 - Were mostly recorded as no one home, repeated calls or other refusals
 - Resulted in outcomes of completed interviews/sufficient partials <1% of the time

Regional Offices

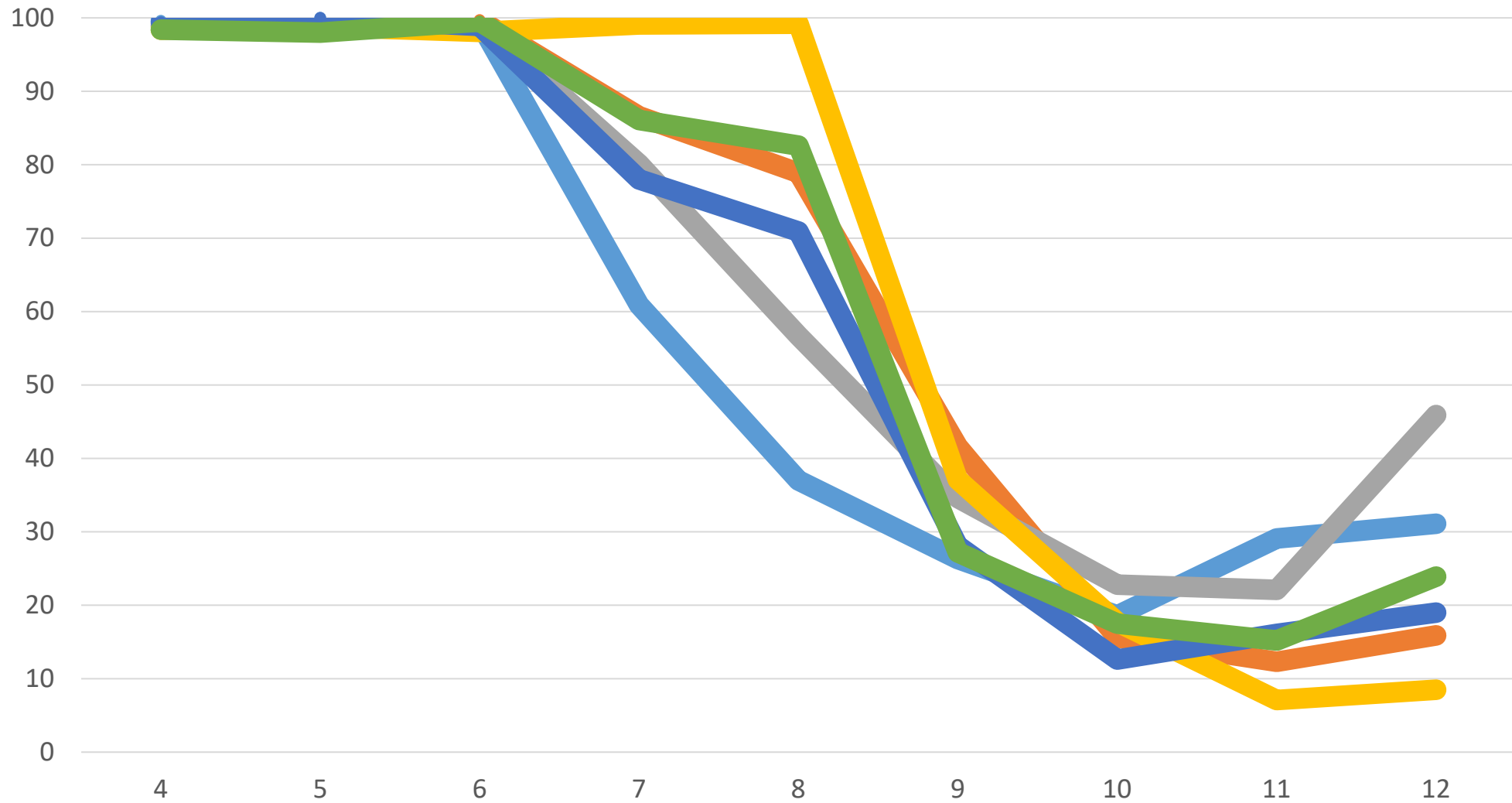
Source: <https://www.census.gov/about/regions.html>



Differences by Quarter and Regional Office – Complete Interviews/Sufficient Partial over the Phone

	Q2	Q3	Q4
Overall	Nearly all	66	19
NY		<u>45</u>	26
Philadelphia		72	15
Chicago		64	31
Atlanta		80	<u>11</u>
Denver		62	16
LA		70	19

% of Interviews with No Personal Visits, April-December 2020



Phone types (Cell/Home/Work)

- Phone numbers are collected in the NHIS
 - For each phone number, the phone type is recorded
- Respondents were much more likely to provide cell phone numbers
- 72% of all phone numbers were recorded as cell phone numbers
 - 18% home phone numbers
 - 9% work phone numbers

Phone numbers provided by vendor

- The NHIS sample is purchased from a vendor
- This vendor provided phone numbers for some sample units starting in April
 - Average of 60% of addresses per month
 - NHIS not able to use databases available to other Census surveys because the survey data is protected by CIPSEA

Methods

- The phone numbers from the vendor were matched to the NHIS datasets by the case control numbers
- Merged dataset was analyzed to determine the frequency of a “match” – where the phone number from the vendor matched a phone number provided during the interview

Phone numbers provided by vendor (cont.)

- Home phone numbers were much more likely to match the numbers provided by the vendor
 - 58% of home phone numbers collected in instrument matched those provided by the vendor, vs only 12% of cell phone numbers that were collected

Phone numbers provided by vendor (cont.)

- 21.9% - Match rate for sample units with phone numbers provided by the vendor
- 27.5% - Match rate for all completed interviews/sufficient partials
- 41.0% - Match rate for all completed interviews/sufficient partials that had numbers provided from vendor

Notes and Strategies Used by FRs

- Issues encountered:
 - **Overall:** Phone numbers were provided by the vendor for specific addresses, and were therefore more often matched with home phone numbers. Since the NHIS is address-based rather than interested in interviewing specific people, getting the ideal phone number (i.e. cell phone number) for a person living at the address was challenging.

Notes and Strategies Used by FRs

- Issues encountered:
 - Wrong numbers, disconnected numbers
 - Full voicemail inboxes
 - Respondents seemed hesitant, worried about scams, or immediately hung up
 - Confusion with 2020 Census

Notes and Strategies Used by FRs

- Strategies used:
 - Many trying 5+ different phone numbers
 - LexisNexis/FastData
 - Online search, Tax office, White Pages
 - Verifying sample units with apartment management offices

Thank you! Any questions?

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