

# Protecting the public's privacy

## Attachment 13b

### NCHS and NHANES

#### Our promise

The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) carried out the first National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) in 1960. Today, more than 60 years later, the promise to protect the privacy of everyone remains our top priority. We believe this record is an important reason why so many people are willing to take part in the survey.

#### There's safety in numbers, especially our numbers!

#### The law...

We take your privacy very seriously. All information that relates to or describes identifiable characteristics of individuals, a practice, or an establishment will be used only for statistical purposes. NCHS staff, contractors, and agents will not disclose or release responses in identifiable form without the consent of the individual or establishment in accordance with section 308(d) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 242m(d))

and the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2018 (CIPSEA Public Law No. 115-435, 132 Stat. 5529 Sec. 302)). In accordance with CIPSEA, every NCHS employee, contractor, and agent has taken an oath and is subject to a jail term of up to five years, a fine of up to \$250,000, or both if he or she willfully discloses ANY identifiable information about you. In addition to the above cited laws, NCHS complies with the Federal Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2015 (6 U.S.C. §§ 151 and 151 note) which protects Federal information systems from cybersecurity risks by screening their networks.

#### The pledge...

Anyone working on the NHANES must sign a pledge. As specified in this written pledge, disclosing your private information is punishable by law.

#### The penalties...

People who break these laws can be fined up to \$250,000, lose their job, or go to jail.

### Other ways we protect your privacy

Those working for NCHS must also follow special rules for handling private information. These rules are meant to ensure that the privacy of the people taking part in NHANES is fully respected.

- Anything that could reveal who you are is removed. This includes, but is not limited to, your or your families' names, addresses, phone numbers, and places of work.
- Data are not released if they are for a geographical location so small that the numbers might identify someone.
- All computers are password protected. Data are encrypted for transmission using secure data networks and housed on secure servers with access restricted to authorized users.

### NCHS and NHANES have a strong record for maintaining privacy during data collection processing.



## Our promise to you

- Your health exam will be free. We will share the results with you and give you a token of appreciation for your time.
- Taking part in NHANES will not affect your benefits like Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, food stamps, or disability.
- We will provide free transportation to our mobile health center or help cover the cost of getting there.
- We will keep your information confidential. We will never give any information to state or federal agencies, including the police or immigration services.
- We will remove all information that could show your identity, like your name, address, or phone numbers.

## Learn More Online or By Calling

For more information on NHANES visit:  
[www.cdc.gov/nhanes](http://www.cdc.gov/nhanes)

You may also call toll-free  
(English or Spanish) at: **1-800-452-6115**

Data from the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) are released in printed reports and on the NCHS website at  
<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs>.

For specific questions about how NCHS protects the information you provide, contact:

### Confidentiality Office, NCHS

Telephone:  
**1-888-642-4159**  
E-mail:  
[NCHSconfidentiality@cdc.gov](mailto:NCHSconfidentiality@cdc.gov)

# How the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey Keeps Your Information

# CONFIDENTIAL



**Centers for Disease  
Control and Prevention**  
National Center for  
Health Statistics