NORC at the University of Chicago

300 E. Randolph St
Suite 4600
Chicago, IL 60601
office (312) 759-4000
www.norc.org

NORC at the University of Chicago

NORC at the University of Chicago is an objective, non-partisan research institution that delivers reliable data and rigorous analysis to guide critical programmatic, business, and policy decisions. Since 1941, our teams have 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 us to transform increasingly complex information into useful knowledge.

Field Interviewer Position Key Details

NORC is seeking driven, self-motivated individuals who are passionate about making meaningful contributions through work that impacts communities and the nation. In this role, you will engage with people from diverse backgrounds, collecting data on their attitudes and behaviors to support important research initiatives.

Field Interviewers (FIs) are detail-oriented professionals who ensure all data is accurately and thoroughly recorded, providing researchers with high-quality information. While Field Interviewers work independently in the field, they are an essential part of the entire project team – committed to meeting weekly hour requirements and submitting administrative tasks on time.

Successful FIs are skilled at connecting with people face-to-face, often through unannounced visits. They are knowledgeable about the study, able to confidently and respectfully invite individuals to participate in interviews, and able to follow study protocols to collect data accurately and efficiently.

Project Information

The National Social Life, Health, and Aging Project (NSHAP) is a nationally representative, longitudinal study of adults in the United States that has been conducted since 2005. NSHAP has been on the cutting edge of aging research by collecting innovative measures such as social networks, partner history, and a wide range of bio measures. NSHAP's main rounds of data collection occur every five years.

Round 5 of NSHAP is an in-person data collection effort beginning in January 2027 and going through May 2028. The first phase will involve conducting household screening to identify potential new NSHAP respondents, and the second phase will involve conducting the full NSHAP interview with both new and returning NSHAP respondents.

What will you be asked to do as a Field Interviewer?

All Round 5 FIs must attend an initial project training on the household screening process. The household screening training will be done remotely, and includes at-home self-study, four half-days of live/synchronous training, and a live certification session. Upon successful completion and certification of this training, FIs will visit sampled households in-person to conduct the household screener. The screener takes approximately five minutes and will be completed on a project-provided tablet.

FIs who pass certification and are successful during the screening-only phase may be invited to attend in-person training in the Chicago area to learn the full NSHAP interviewing protocol. Training for the NSHAP interview will involve additional at-home self-study modules, followed by a six-day, in-person training. At this training, FIs will learn how to administer the full NSHAP questionnaire and all bio measures and will complete a full interview for certification. Successful completion of all training and certification requirements is mandatory before beginning each phase of data collection.

FIs who are certified to begin NSHAP interview data collection will 1) make in-person and phone outreach attempts to NSHAP respondents to explain the study and gain their cooperation for the interview, and 2) conduct a roughly two-hour in-person interview in respondents' homes. The in-home interview includes the collection of several bio measures; however, this round of NSHAP does *not* require FIs to collect any biospecimens (such as blood or saliva) from respondents.

FIs will be responsible for documenting all contact attempts and interview activities as demonstrated in training. They will maintain regular communication with their Field Manager (FM), including timely and accurate submission and completion of administrative tasks such as timesheets, expense reports, respondent fee reports, reading FI memos, and so on. FIs will also be expected to attend any required booster training calls during data collection for additional, targeted training and protocol review.

FIs must be willing and able to travel extensively in their home/local area as part of their role on NSHAP R5. This includes:

- Driving 50 miles or more one way from their home or metro area to reach assigned interview locations.
- Visiting multiple locations on a single trip, often across different communities and counties.
- Working in various weather conditions, including heat, rain, or cold, while maintaining professionalism and reliability.
- Managing flexible schedules to accommodate travel demands and respondent availability, including evenings and weekends.
- Lifting and carrying up to 20 lbs. (i.e., a suitcase with materials and equipment) up and down stairs as needed for fieldwork or setup. This level of mobility is essential to ensure comprehensive and representative data collection across diverse populations and geographic areas.
- Being comfortable working in close physical proximity to others to accurately collect physical measurements in a professional and respectful manner.

Work Schedule

FIs will be expected to work evenings and weekends (to visit homes at times when many respondents may be home), in addition to some weekday availability. To maximize the chance of reaching respondents, FIs will be expected to vary the time of day and day of the week when they make in-person visits or phone follow-ups.

Assignments are temporary, with the length of assignment determined by the number of cases assigned to work as well as each interviewer's on-the-job performance. In very busy weeks of data collection, interviewers may be able to work more than 20 hours in a week. We expect most staff will work around 20 hours per week for the duration of their assignment. However, interviewers in some locations may receive fewer cases and see their hours decrease over time as their caseloads diminish.

Interviewers will be assigned cases to work after having successfully completed training and required background checks. If training is not completed successfully during the training dates outlined below, further work cannot be completed, and employment will be terminated.

Project Schedule and Requirements

NSHAP R5 will begin in **January 2027** with the following requirements for all interviewers to be staffed:

Household Screening Training

Household screening training consists of at-home self-study, remote training, and remote certification.

- Self-Study: Approximately 4 hours
- Remote Training: 4 half-days of live/synchronous instruction - Currently planned for Mon-Thurs afternoons, Central Time
- Certification: Approximately 1 hour
- The two training sessions are currently planned for 2027:
    - February 1-4, with certification on either 2/5 or 2/8
    - February 8-11, with certification on either 2/12 or 2/15
- Equipment and home study materials are expected to arrive to interviewers one week in advance of their training session.
- Interviewers must complete their technology check and self-study prior to the start of their live training session.

In-Person Training

Interviewers selected to continue with in-person fieldwork will complete self-study followed by 6 days of in-person training in the Chicago suburbs. The 2027 dates for the three training sessions are:

- Training 1: March 3–9
- Training 2: March 31–April 6
- Training 3: April 14–20

At the conclusion of in-person training, each interviewer must **complete a full certification**. This will involve administering the complete interview with an NSHAP project team member to demonstrate mastery of interviewing technique, questionnaire administration, and all project data collection protocols.

After completing in-person training and certifying successfully, interviewers must also **complete one additional practice interview** with a friend or family member once they have returned home.

Upon completing these requirements, interviewers may begin data collection immediately. The data collection period (both screening and interviewing) is projected to go through May 2028.

Beyond successfully completing training and certification, continued employment on the project is contingent on meeting established project goals and standards. An FI's ongoing and completed casework is validated and evaluated throughout the field period, and they will receive performance feedback directly from their FM. FIs can expect to receive consistent performance evaluations based on metrics accumulated over the course of the assignment. Unprofessional conduct during training or data collection, data falsification, mishandling respondent incentives, repeated failure to adhere to project protocols or to complete administrative requirements, or field results extremely outside established norms (for example, abnormally high refusal rates or abnormally long interview times) can be grounds for dismissal.

Compensation and Benefits

Field Interviewers are paid by the hour. Compensation will include time spent training, traveling to and from assigned cases, contacting respondents, speaking with their Field Manager, and other approved activities.

Field Interviewers will also receive reimbursement for mileage to and from their cases, which will help defray personal automobile gas and other maintenance expenses that may be incurred while working on official NORC business. The current mileage reimbursement rate is $0.70/mile. Interviewers will also be reimbursed for tolls, parking, and other approved expenses.

Field Interviewers will qualify for NORC retirement fund contributions to a TIAA-CREF 403b account upon working at least 1,000 hours. Field Interviewers can make voluntary contributions into the retirement account immediately.

A Field Interviewer who performs up to high standards will be eligible for annual raises, performance bonuses, or other incentives. Many of our current managers started as Field Interviewers, and NORC encourages Field Interviewers to apply for field management positions when they are posted.

Background Check and Automobile Insurance Requirement

If selected for hire, you will be required to pass a background check and a Motor Vehicle Report check prior to beginning work, and to comply with any additional project-specific requirements. You must provide proof of automobile insurance that meets or exceeds current state minimum requirements where you reside. You must maintain this coverage for the duration of the time while driving for approved NORC business.