

Survey Methodology

This survey was conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago with funding from the Capital Area Food Bank (CAFB). Staff from NORC and CAFB collaborated on all aspects of the study.

Interviews were conducted with adults age 18 and older in the D.C. Metropolitan Area (this area includes the following counties: Montgomery Co, MD, Prince George's Co, MD, Fairfax Co, VA, Prince William Co, VA, Arlington Co, VA, Alexandria, VA, and Washington DC). Interviews were conducted 05/04-16/2026.

Data for the probability-based sample are collected using a multi-mode address based (or ABS) approach that allows residents to complete the interview via web or with an NORC telephone interviewer. The sampling frame is based on an extract of the U.S. Postal Service delivery-sequence file (DSF). The DSF 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. Addresses are stratified by geographic area and predicted response propensity quintile within geographic area. Addresses that were sampled for the 2025 CAFB Survey were removed from the sampling frame prior to sampling. Addresses were sampled from each stratum in inverse proportion to the average predicted response propensity for that stratum. Within each geographic area, addresses in the lowest response propensity quintile were sampled at twice the rate of addresses in the other quintiles. Most sampled households were mailed a postcard inviting them to complete the survey either online using a unique PIN or via telephone by calling a toll-free number. Postcards were addressed to: [CITY] HOUSEHOLD. There was no within household selection for households with multiple adults. Thirty-one percent of the postcard sample received a non-response follow-up text message reminder during the second week of data collection to boost response in households that did not respond to the postcard. Additionally, 72,082 sample lines received a text message invitation rather than a postcard.

The interviews were conducted in English and Spanish. Respondents were offered a monetary incentive (either \$10 or \$15) for completing the survey.

Quality assurance checks were conducted to ensure data quality. In total, 43 interviews were removed for nonresponse to at least 50% of the questions asked of them or for completing the survey in less than one-third the median interview time for the full sample. These interviews were excluded from the data file prior to weighting.

Once the data were cleaned, a nonresponse adjustment and raking process were used to adjust for the sample design, differential survey nonresponse and noncoverage of the sampling frame along demographic and geographic dimensions. Raking variables included age, gender, race/ethnicity, education, number of adults in the household, and geographic area. Population control totals for the raking variables were obtained from the 2024 Population Estimates reported by the U.S. Census Bureau, along with population estimates obtained from the 2020-2024 American Community Survey. The weighted data reflect the population of adults age 18 and over in the D.C. Metropolitan Area.

The margin of sampling error (MOE), including the design effect, among all adults age 18 and over for the overall D.C. Metropolitan Area and for each county are:

Area	n	Design effect	MOE (+/- percentage points)
Overall	3,804	2.8	2.6
Montgomery Co, MD	537	2.3	6.5
Prince George's Co, MD	512	2.0	6.1
Fairfax Co, VA	532	2.3	6.5
Prince William Co, VA	579	2.2	6.0
Arlington Co, VA	558	2.2	6.2
Alexandria, VA	537	2.2	6.3
Washington DC	549	1.8	5.6

Sampling error is only one of many potential sources of error and there may be other unmeasured error in this or any other survey.

For more information, email info@norc.org.