

**National HIV Behavioral Surveillance (NHBS):
Men Who Have Sex With Men (MSM)**

NHBS-MSM2023 Formative Assessment Manual



**Behavioral Surveillance Team
NCHHSTP/DHP/BCSB**

Version Date: November 2022

Acknowledgements

This formative assessment manual for the National HIV Behavioral Surveillance (NHBS) system was written by staff of the Behavioral Surveillance Team, Behavioral and Clinical Surveillance Branch (BCSB), Division of HIV Prevention (DHP), National Center for HIV, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention (NCHHSTP), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

All material in this document is in the public domain and may be used and reprinted without permission; citation of the source is nevertheless appreciated.

Suggested Citation:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *National HIV Behavioral Surveillance, Men Who Have Sex With Men— 2023 Formative Assessment Manual*. November 2022. Available from: <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/statistics/systems/nhbs/operations.html>.

Contacts

Corresponding Author:

Rebecca Hershow, PhD, MSPH
Health Scientist
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
1600 Clifton Rd, Mailstop E-46
Atlanta, Georgia 30333
Telephone: (404) 718-1597; E-mail: qdt8@cdc.gov

Contributing Authors:

Dita Broz, PhD, MPH
Paul Denning, MD, MPH
Jeffery Todd, MCC
Cyprian Wejnert, PhD

General NHBS Inquiries:

E-mail: nhbs@cdc.gov

Table of Contents

Glossary.....	1
1. Formative Assessment Overview.....	2
1.0 Overview.....	2
1.1 Goals & Objectives of Formative Assessment for NHBS-MSM2023.....	2
1.2 Operational Considerations.....	2
1.3 Cultural Competence and Humility.....	3
2. Focus Areas Specific to VBS.....	4
2.0 Overview.....	4
2.1 Data Sources and Collection Methods.....	4
2.2 Venue Types.....	6
2.3 Venue Identification.....	7
2.4 Venue Assessment.....	12
2.5 Ongoing Formative Assessment.....	17
3. Formative Assessment Products.....	18
3.0 Overview.....	18
3.1 Implementation Timeline.....	19
3.2 Secondary Data Review Worksheets.....	19
3.3 Formative Assessment Data Collection Plan.....	21
3.4 Formative Assessment Tools.....	21
3.5 Formative Assessment Data Report.....	22
3.6 Venue Universe and Summary Table.....	24
Appendices.....	26
A Model Formative Assessment Topics and Interview Questions.....	26
B NHBS-MSM2023 Formative Assessment Workbook.....	35
C Count Form.....	36
D Enumeration Form.....	40
E Model Venue Universe.....	43

Glossary

Type 1 Enumeration	Count of men frequenting a venue.
Type 2 Enumeration	Count of men frequenting a venue who are <i>eligible</i> to participate in NHBS-MSM (i.e., are ≥ 18 years of age, identify as a man, live in the project area, and have ever had sex with another man).
Potential Venues	Venues (spaces) that a primary or secondary data source reports are frequented by MSM.
Eligible Venues	<i>Potential</i> venues where 50% or more of the men frequenting the venue are adult MSM.
Accessible Venues	<i>Eligible</i> venues where it is logistically feasible to conduct recruitment events (i.e., the venue has a sufficient number of MSM frequenting the venue to make it worthwhile to conduct recruitment there, and when necessary, the venue is safe and has cooperative management, parking for a van, and adequate space for recruiting, interviewing, and HIV testing).
Venue Universe	Listing of all the <i>potential</i> venues that a project area has identified through secondary data review and primary data collection, along with the information needed to determine venue eligibility and accessibility.
Venue Summary Table	Table showing the number of <i>eligible</i> venues in each venue category and the number and percent of <i>eligible</i> venues that are <i>accessible</i> .
In-person Recruitment	Face-to-face recruitment at a venue.
Virtual Recruitment	Online recruitment through social networking apps and websites, like Facebook or Instagram, or through geosocial networking apps and websites, like Grindr and Scruff.
Days of Operation	Days of the week when a venue is an <i>eligible</i> venue (i.e., days when 50% or more of the men frequenting the venue are adult MSM).
Day-Time Periods	Days of the week and times that are best for conducting recruitment events at each <i>accessible</i> venue.
Sampling Frame	List of <i>accessible</i> venues (venue sampling frame) or day-time periods (day-time sampling frame). From the venue sampling frame, project areas will randomly select the venues where recruitment events will be conducted each month, and from the day-time sampling frame, they will randomly select the days and times when the events will be held at each venue.

1

Formative Assessment Overview

1.0 Overview

The purpose of this document and the accompanying appendices is to provide NHBS project areas with information *specific to the formative assessment process for the NHBS-MSM2023 cycle*, including the expected products and timelines. This document should be used alongside the *Formative Assessment Approach and Methods in NHBS* document which provides in-depth information about the overall approach to conducting formative assessment in NHBS and data collection methods.

1.1 Goals & Objectives of Formative Assessment for NHBS-MSM2023

Goals

- Describe HIV epidemiology and prevention efforts among MSM.
- Engage the MSM community and its partners.
- Inform NHBS venue-based sampling (VBS) and operations for MSM.

Objectives

- Describe the social and demographic characteristics of MSM.
- Garner the support of the MSM community and its partners.
- Identify venues (spaces) that are frequented by MSM.
- Obtain information needed for conducting field operations (e.g., appropriate staff, venue logistics, and ideal days and times for recruitment).
- Identify potential barriers to recruitment and participation among MSM and develop solutions to address them.
- Develop questions of local interest for HIV prevention among MSM.
- Develop a plan to monitor operations and recruitment through ongoing formative assessment.
- Develop a plan for data dissemination to occur at the conclusion of data collection.

1.2 Operational Considerations

Below are key operational considerations for formative assessment for the NHBS-MSM2023 cycle.

Recruiting. Venue-based sampling (VBS) will be used for recruiting MSM in NHBS. VBS operations include scheduling and conducting recruitment events at eligible and accessible venues.

Interviewing. Interviewing will occur in-person either during a recruitment event, or in some cases, by appointment after the event.

HIV Testing. Testing will occur in-person at the same time and place as the interview. Testing will be done through a blood-based rapid-rapid algorithm.

1.3 Cultural Competence and Humility

Project areas should plan to provide cultural competency training for NHBS-MSM staff prior to data collection. Cultural competency training could explore respectful terminology, reducing stigma, and how to be an ally to the community. Project areas may seek out collaborators at local organizations to provide this training. Whenever possible, such training should be conducted by a member of the local MSM population. Any cultural competency training should be grounded in insight garnered from direct engagement with the population of interest, as expertise garnered indirectly from research may be insufficient to describe the specific needs of the local population.

In working with the population of interest, it is important for project staff to recognize that not all MSM have shared the same life experience. It is also important for project staff to not make assumptions about the sexual orientation and outness of community members and members of partner organizations involved in formative assessment.

2.0 Overview

In the venue-based sampling (VBS) method employed during NHBS-MSM, venues are spaces frequented by MSM where they can be recruited to participate in the project. A variety of spaces can serve as venues, including bars, dance clubs, retail businesses, cafes and restaurants, health clubs, social and religious organizations, sports teams, adult bookstores and bathhouses, high-traffic streets in gay neighborhoods, parks, beaches, gay pride festivals, dance parties, and dating applications (apps) and websites, among others.

During formative assessment, project areas should use their primary and secondary data to identify venues and assess the suitability of the venues for conducting NHBS-MSM. Venue identification and assessment form the foundation of VBS, and thus, are two of the most important functions of formative assessment in NHBS-MSM. Moreover, because the characteristics of the MSM frequenting the venues ultimately determine the characteristics of the MSM enrolled in the project, a comprehensive set of venues will help project areas enroll a diverse and representative sample of MSM.

2.1 Data Sources and Collection Methods

To identify and assess the venues in their communities, project areas should utilize the data sources and the primary and secondary data collection methods outlined in the *NHBS Formative Assessment Approach and Methods*. Additional data sources and collection methods that are specific to VBS are described below.

2.1A Additional Data Sources

Gay media. Print and online media, including social media, designed for the local MSM community can provide information on MSM venues, social organizations, and special events. Most major cities have gay newspapers, magazines, or nightlife guides, some of which may focus on specific MSM subpopulations, like Black or Hispanic/Latino MSM. Print copies of media can be obtained from display racks in gay neighborhoods, bars, or other venues. Online media can be accessed through an internet search, and may include MSM-focused blogs, websites, and social media pages.

Gay travel guides. Gay travel guides are another excellent source of information on MSM venues, social organizations, and special events. They also often list sex clubs, bathhouses, and cruising areas. The visitor's or tourism bureaus in many cities now provide gay travel information which can be accessed online. An internet search using the term "gay travel <project city>" should also produce venue information specific to a project area.

Other online sources. Project areas can find local MSM community resources online by searching the internet with the term "gay community resources <project city>." Internet searches can also produce information on specific venue categories. For example, MSM sex

establishments or environments could be located by searching the internet with the term “gay cruising areas <project city>.”

2.1B Additional Data Collection Methods

Enumerations. In VBS, the men frequenting a venue can be assessed using either of two types of enumerations (counts):

- Type 1 Enumerations, which are counts of all men frequenting a venue.
- Type 2 Enumerations, which are counts of just those men frequenting a venue who are eligible for project participation.

Type 2 Enumerations can also be used to examine the demographic characteristics of the men frequenting a venue, and to determine whether a venue meets the eligibility requirements for NHBS-MSM (see **Section 2.2B** for venue eligibility requirements).

Counts of men frequenting a venue serve two main purposes. First, these counts can help project areas decide whether it is worthwhile to conduct recruitment events at a venue (during recruitment events, project areas recruit men to participate in NHBS-MSM, and when applicable, interview and HIV test them). Because recruitment events require considerable time and effort to organize and conduct, it may not be worthwhile for project areas to conduct events at venues frequented by few men where they would only be able to obtain a small number of interviews (< 4). Second, counts of men frequenting a venue can help project areas determine the best days and times for conducting recruitment events at the venue. Usually, days and times with the largest number of men frequenting the venue are best, but for project areas that interview or HIV test participants inside venues during recruitment events, overcrowded venues can sometimes make it logistically difficult to conduct operations. In these circumstances, days and times with fewer men frequenting the venue may be better.

Enumerations should be conducted for approximately 30 to 60 minutes. The counts obtained during the enumerations should then be standardized to a 4-hour period, which is the typical duration of a recruitment event. **Appendix C** of this manual contains a Count Form and **Appendix D**, an Enumeration Form that project areas can use for their enumerations. Instructions for completing these forms are included in the appendices as well.

Type 1 Enumerations. To conduct Type 1 Enumerations at a venue in person, project areas need just one staff member. The staff member should use a tally counter, or “clicker,” to count the number of individuals who appear male and ≥ 18 years of age who are at the venue or who enter the venue during the enumeration period. Each individual should only be counted once, even if he leaves the venue and reenters at a later time. At the end of the enumeration period, the count should be recorded on the Count Form. Project areas that are planning to recruit virtually (see **Section 2.3B**) can conduct *virtual enumerations* by following these methods and counting the profiles of individuals who appear male and ≥ 18 years of age.



Project areas should carefully assess the need for Type 1 Enumerations. In most cases, the counts obtained from Type 1 Enumerations can more easily be estimated with venue observations.

Type 2 Enumerations. To conduct Type 2 Enumerations at a venue in person, project areas need at least two staff members— one to count individuals frequenting the venue and one or more to interview them. As with Type 1 Enumerations, one staff member should use a tally counter to count the number of individuals who appear male and ≥ 18 years of age who are at the venue or who enter the venue during the enumeration period. The other staff member(s) should consecutively approach the individuals who have been counted and invite them to participate in a brief eligibility interview. After each interview is completed, the next individual counted should be approached and asked to participate. Counting should continue throughout the enumeration period; it should not stop until the last individual has been approached for interview. Interview responses should be recorded on the Enumeration Form, and at the end of the enumeration period, the count should be entered on the Count Form.

By combining the counts with the information obtained from the brief eligibility interviews, project areas can estimate the number of men frequenting a venue who meet the eligibility criteria for participation in NHBS-MSM. Compared to the *general* counts produced by Type 1 Enumerations, the *eligible* counts produced by Type 2 Enumerations provide a much better indication of the number of interviews project areas can expect to complete as a result of a recruitment event. An additional advantage of Type 2 Enumerations over Type 1 Enumerations is that the information from the eligibility interviews can be used to describe the demographic characteristics of men frequenting a venue or estimate the proportion of men frequenting a venue who meet the eligibility criteria for participation in NHBS-MSM. This latter function is particularly important for assessing venues that have a high proportion of males frequenting the venue who are not MSM.



For **virtual enumerations**, project areas **cannot** contact individuals and conduct brief eligibility interviews online because personal information cannot be obtained from individuals using unsecure means. Instead, project areas should just review the profiles of individuals who appear male and ≥ 18 years of age and collect any needed eligibility or demographic information from the profiles.

2.2 Venue Types

In NHBS-MSM, venues are classified into three types: 1) *potential* venues, 2) *eligible* venues, and 3) *accessible* venues. Each of the three types of venues is defined below.

2.2A Potential Venues

Potential venues are venues that a primary or secondary data source reports are frequented by MSM. *Potential* venues must be located within the funded metropolitan statistical area (MSA) or Division, or in the case of dating apps and websites, they must be available to MSM who reside in the funded MSA or Division. Nevertheless, if it is impractical to conduct field operations throughout the entire MSA or Division, project areas should limit *potential* venues to the principal city of the MSA or Division. On the other hand, if the MSM who frequent venues within the MSA or Division do not reflect the diversity of the local MSM population, project areas may include venues in areas adjacent to the MSA or Division if it will improve the diversity of the sample of MSM enrolled. To include venues outside the MSA or Division,

project areas must provide written justification and receive approval from their CDC project officer.

Venues **cannot** serve as *potential* venues if their primary function is medical or mental health care, HIV or STI testing, or HIV or STI prevention services. Similarly, venues that provide social services to men living with HIV **cannot** be *potential* venues either. Recruiting participants from these types of venues could bias the sample and the information collected. Nevertheless, venues can be considered *potential* venues if they provide care, testing, and prevention services that are only ancillary. For example, a bathhouse that offers HIV counseling and testing as an ancillary service could be a *potential* venue.

2.2B Eligible Venues

Eligible venues are *potential* venues where 50% or more of the men frequenting the venue are adult MSM. The purpose of this 50% cut-off is to minimize the burden of recruiting and screening men who are not MSM. Men who meet the following criteria are considered adult MSM:

- 18 years of age or older.
- Self-identify as a man **or** were assigned male at birth and self-identify as non-binary.
- Ever had oral or anal sex with another man.

2.2C Accessible Venues

Accessible venues are *eligible* venues where it is logistically feasible to conduct recruitment events. That is to say, the venue has a sufficient number of MSM frequenting the venue to make it worthwhile to conduct recruitment there, and when necessary, the venue is safe and has cooperative management, parking for a van, and adequate space for recruiting, interviewing, and HIV testing. All the *accessible* venues in a project area comprise the venue sampling frame and are the spaces where recruitment events can be conducted.

2.3 Venue Identification

Through secondary data review and primary data collection, project areas should identify all the *potential* venues in their project area and list them in a spreadsheet called the Venue Universe. To assist with venue assessment (**Section 2.4**), the Venue Universe should also contain information on venue logistics and the number and characteristics of MSM who frequent the venue. A model Venue Universe is provided in **Appendix E** of this manual that project areas can customize for local use.

Project areas often use the Venue Universe from the last NHBS-MSM cycle as a starting point for identifying venues. They update this list of past *potential* venues to create a list of current *potential* venues. To update their Venue Universe, project areas must determine which of the past *potential* venues continues to be a *potential* venue and they must identify any new *potential* venues that have opened in the project area since the last NHBS-MSM cycle. As with other

formative assessment activities, updating the Venue Universe should be an iterative process. Project areas should begin by reviewing their secondary data, and then build upon the information collected by interviewing primary data sources and conducting observations at *potential* venues. Interviews and observations should similarly build upon one another.

To ensure that project areas compile a comprehensive list of *potential* venues, they should employ a variety of secondary data sources and interview a diverse group of primary data sources. The primary data sources interviewed should represent MSM from different age groups and racial and ethnic backgrounds. Most notably, project areas must be sure to interview MSM from those subpopulations disproportionately affected by HIV and MSM from any subpopulations that were underrepresented in previous NHBS-MSM cycles.



Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Venue Universes from MSM6 (2020) may be incomplete. Accordingly, project areas may benefit from using the MSM5 (2017) Venue Universe in addition to the MSM6 (2020) Venue Universe as a starting point for identifying venues.

2.3A Venue Categories

Once project areas have identified a *potential* venue, they should classify the venue into one of the following categories:

- Ballroom community
- Bars
- Cafes and restaurants
- Dance clubs
- Dating applications and websites
- Fitness clubs and gymnasiums
- Gay Pride and similar events
- Parks and beaches
- Raves, circuit parties, and similar events
- Retail businesses
- Sex establishments and environments
- Social organizations
- Street locations in gay neighborhoods
- Other

The definition of each venue category is provided below to help project areas classify their *potential* venues into the appropriate categories. If a *potential* venue meets the definition of more than one category, project areas should choose the category that best describes the venue or the activities that occur there. On the other hand, if a *potential* venue does not appear to meet the definition of any category, project areas should consult their CDC project officer and together decide whether the venue should be placed in the “Other” category.

Ballroom community. The “Ballroom community” consists of social groups called *houses* that function much like extended families and are composed of predominantly Black and Hispanic/Latino LGBTQ+ people. Houses are best known for sponsoring fashion and dance competitions called *balls*, and as a result, they are often referred to as the ballroom community. “Ballroom community” includes houses, as well as any events they may sponsor, such as balls.

Bars. “Bars” are venues whose primary function is serving alcoholic beverages. While some bars might serve snacks or have a small dance floor, they should be classified as “Bars” if the primary activity there is serving alcoholic beverages. Restaurants and dance clubs that include bars should not be classified as “Bars.”

Cafés and restaurants. “Cafés and restaurants” are venues whose primary function is serving coffee or food. Although many restaurants have a small bar and some have dance floors, they should be classified as “Cafés and restaurants” if the primary activity there is serving food.

Dance clubs. “Dance clubs” are venues that have large dance floors and a stage for musicians or a booth for disc jockeys. Many dance clubs have bars or serve food, but they should be classified as “Dance clubs” if the primary activity there is dancing.

Dating applications and websites. “Dating applications and websites” allow MSM to search for and interact with potential romantic or sexual partners via the internet. Users of the apps and websites can create profiles describing themselves and their interests, which can then be viewed by other users. Users who want to contact one another can do so through the app or website. The apps and websites also employ geolocation features, which allow users to select profiles in a particular locality.

Fitness clubs and gymnasiums. “Fitness clubs and gymnasiums” are venues that are used for exercise and personal fitness. Bathhouses that have exercise equipment or pools should not be classified as “Fitness clubs and gymnasiums;” they should be classified as “Sex establishments and environments.”

Gay Pride and similar events. “Gay Pride and similar events” are large community celebrations of LGBTQ+ people that often include parades, festivals, and artistic performances.

Parks and beaches. “Parks and beaches” are outdoor locations used for recreation, socialization, or entertainment. If parks or beaches are used by MSM primarily for sexual activity, they should be classified as “Sex establishments and environments.”

Raves, circuit parties, and similar events. “Raves, circuit parties, and similar events” are typically large-scale dance events for MSM that occur on a single night or over the course of a week or weekend. Raves and circuit parties may not have a fixed location or they may be conducted at an established dance club or bar. Even if they are conducted at a dance club or bar, they should still be classified as “Raves, circuit parties, and similar events.”

Retail businesses. “Retail businesses” are venues where products, like clothing, books, and household goods, are sold or where services, like haircuts, pet care, and tanning, are provided. Businesses that sell sexual paraphernalia should also be classified as “Retail businesses” unless

they are used by MSM primarily for sexual activity. In that case, they should be classified as “Sex establishments and environments.”

Sex establishments and environments. “Sex establishments and environments” are venues used by MSM primarily for sexual activity. These venues include bathhouses and sex clubs, adult bookstores/theaters, and cruising areas. Because there could be a very large number of adult bookstores/theaters and cruising areas in some project areas, it would be extremely difficult and labor intensive for project areas to identify and assess all these *potential* venues. Accordingly, adult bookstores/theaters and cruising areas must meet additional criteria to be considered *potential* venues. Unlike other venues that only have to be identified by one primary or secondary data source, adult bookstores/theaters and cruising areas must be identified by at least two primary or secondary data sources to be considered *potential* venues. Cruising areas must also meet these three criteria: 1) be outdoors, 2) be located on public property, and 3) be legally accessible.

Social organizations. “Social organizations” include any type of club for LGBTQ+ people. These clubs could be athletic, artistic, fandom, gaming, professional, political, religious, or educational. Support groups for MSM living with HIV or groups that meet for HIV clinical or prevention services **cannot** be *potential* venues and should not be included in the Venue Universe.

Street locations in gay neighborhoods. “Street locations in gay neighborhoods” are corners or other areas of the sidewalk in a gay neighborhood that have a high volume of foot traffic. For standardization, project areas are limited to 1 street location in each gay neighborhood in their project area. “Street locations in gay neighborhoods” are not substitutes for individual venues and should not be associated with any specific venue. Furthermore, recruiting participants on the street outside a venue does not constitute a street location.

Other. Venues that do not meet any of the above definitions should be classified as “Other.” Project areas should use this category only in rare circumstances and they must receive approval from their CDC project officer to do so.

Grouping venues into categories should help project areas identify *potential* venues more efficiently and effectively. When interviewing primary data sources, project areas would be able to collect more accurate venue information if they asked the sources about venues in specific categories. For example, project areas should start by showing the first primary data source a list of “Ballroom community” venues and asking the source to verify the ballroom houses and events on the list and to identify any additional houses or events. Next, they should show the source a list of “Bars” and ask the source to verify the bars on the list and to identify any additional ones. Project areas should repeat this venue verification and identification process for the remaining venue categories. The list of *potential* venues should then be updated and shown to the next primary data source. That source should also be asked to verify the venues in each category and identify any additional ones. This process of interviewing primary data sources and updating the list of *potential* venues should continue until the venue information is complete and no additional venues are identified.



Using their primary and secondary data sources, project areas must attempt to identify *potential* venues in each of the venue categories, with the exception of “Dating applications and websites.” Because recruiting from dating apps and websites is optional, project areas should identify venues in this category only if they plan on recruiting from these venues.

2.3B Recruitment Method

Depending on the category of venue MSM are frequenting, they can be recruited to participate in NHBS-MSM using one of two methods: in-person recruitment or virtual (online) recruitment (see **Table 2.1**). In-person recruitment is the method used in NHBS-MSM cycles, whereby participants are recruited face-to-face at a venue; and virtual recruitment is a newly permitted method for NHBS-MSM2023, whereby participants are recruited online through social networking apps and websites, like Facebook or Instagram, or through geosocial networking apps and websites, like Grindr and Scruff. Virtual recruitment is optional in NHBS-MSM2023; project areas are not required to use this recruitment method.

MSM frequenting “Ballroom community” venues and “Social organizations” can be recruited either virtually or in-person, whereas those frequenting “Dating apps and websites” must be recruited virtually and those frequenting any of the other venue categories must be recruited in-person. Although project areas can choose to recruit virtually at “Ballroom community” venues and “Social organizations,” they may only do so if the members of these groups also interact with one another in-person and within the funded MSA or Division. If the members of ballroom houses or social organizations just interact online or outside the funded MSA or Division, project areas ***cannot*** recruit at those venues.

Table 2.1-Recruitment method(s) available for each venue category

Recruitment Method	Venue Category
In-person <i>or</i> Virtual	Ballroom community Social organizations
In-person	Bars Cafes and restaurants Dance clubs Fitness clubs and gymnasiums Gay Pride and similar events Parks and beaches Raves, circuit parties, and similar events Retail businesses Sex establishments and environments Social organizations Street locations in gay neighborhoods Other
Virtual	Dating applications and websites

Regardless of whether MSM are recruited in-person or virtually, they must be interviewed and tested for HIV in-person. For ***in-person recruitment***, interviewing and testing are usually performed during the recruitment event, or in some limited cases, by appointment after the event. For ***virtual recruitment***, interviewing and testing are always performed by appointment after the recruitment event.



To conduct interviewing and testing by appointment, project areas will need an interviewing and testing space, such as a project office or van. They may also conduct interviewing and testing at one of their MSM venues ***before*** or ***after*** an in-person recruitment event.

2.4 Venue Assessment

After project areas have compiled a comprehensive list of *potential* venues, they will assess the venues for eligibility and accessibility in a two-step process. In the first step, the *potential* venues will be assessed for eligibility; and in the second step, the *eligible* venues will be assessed for accessibility. Furthermore, for each *accessible* venue identified, project areas will then determine which days of the week the venue is an *eligible* venue, as well as which days of the week and times are best for conducting recruitment events at the venue.

All the venue information project areas obtain during venue assessment will be recorded in the Venue-Day-Time Sampling (VDTS) Program, the computer program on the Data Coordinating Center (DCC) data portal used for VBS. During NHBS-MSM, project areas will use the VDTS Program to manage venue information and schedule recruitment events.

2.4A Eligibility

Project areas must determine whether each *potential* venue on their Venue Universe is an *eligible* venue (i.e., a venue where 50% or more of the men frequenting the venue are adult MSM). In most cases, project areas will be able to readily ascertain venue eligibility from their secondary data review, interviews, focus groups, or observations. However, in a very small number of cases, project areas may need to conduct Type 2 Enumerations to determine whether a *potential* venue is an *eligible* venue (see **Section 2.1B** and **Appendices C and D** of this manual). Type 2 Enumerations may be necessary at venues that are frequented by a high proportion of males who are underage or who are not MSM.

Dating apps and websites. To standardize the identification of “Dating applications and websites” across project areas, CDC will provide project areas with a list of dating apps and websites that are *eligible* venues and can be used for ***virtual recruitment***. CDC will compile this list in collaboration with the project areas based on their prior experience with dating apps and websites and their findings from formative assessment. To be included on the list of *eligible* venues, dating apps and websites must also meet these criteria:

- Commonly used by MSM in the U.S.
- Available in all 20 NHBS project areas

- Geolocation feature can restrict user profiles to the project area’s principal city or funded MSA or Division
- The majority of user profiles belong to adult MSM or user profiles can be limited to adult MSM
- Recruitment on the app or website can adhere to NHBS-MSM VBS methods, such as counting user profiles and contacting users one-on-one

After CDC and project areas have compiled the list of eligible “Dating applications and websites,” any project areas planning to recruit from these venues will need to assess the venues for accessibility.

2.4B Accessibility

Project areas must determine whether each *eligible* venue on their Venue Universe is an *accessible* venue (i.e., a venue where it is logistically feasible to conduct recruitment events). Project areas should make this decision based on their assessment of the following venue characteristics:

Safety. The safety of project staff should be a project area’s foremost concern. Staff must always have a safe environment in which to work. Local law enforcement officials can provide safety information on neighborhoods and on specific venues.

Management cooperation. Project areas that plan to conduct *any* field operations inside a venue or plan to recruit virtually from a “Ballroom community” or a “Social organization” must obtain permission from the venue owner or manager. Project areas that plan to conduct *all* field operations outside a venue do not need permission from the venue owner or manager, but they may still want to obtain it to foster positive relations. Project areas that plan to recruit virtually from a “Dating application and website” also do not need to obtain permission from the venue owner or manager.

Agreements with venue owners or managers can be informal or they can be formal memorandums of understanding (MOUs). Written permission is often helpful to have if uncooperative venue staff are encountered during field operations. Project areas that plan on conducting field operations in sex environments may also want to obtain a letter of support from a senior law enforcement official in case they encounter the police while in the field. When trying to gain approval from venue owners or managers, project areas should emphasize the benefits of NHBS-MSM to the community and make it clear that field operations are structured to minimize the burden on management and on those frequenting the venue. MSM community leaders and gatekeepers can help project areas gain access to venues by making introductions to venue owners and managers and facilitating discussions with them. Venue owners and managers who have successfully worked with project areas during previous NHBS-MSM cycles can be especially effective at facilitating discussions with other venue owners and managers and helping project areas gain access to their venues.

Space for field operations. Project areas that plan on recruiting, interviewing, or HIV testing inside a venue must identify space in the venue for that activity, whereas project areas that plan on recruiting, interviewing, or HIV testing outside a venue must identify space in the immediate vicinity of the venue. Project areas with vans also require space near the venue for parking.

Sufficient interview yield. Venues do not have to yield a minimum number of interviews to be considered accessible. Nevertheless, because recruitment events require a substantial amount of time and effort to organize and conduct, it may not be worthwhile for project areas to conduct events at venues frequented by few MSM where they will only be able to obtain a small number of interviews (< 4).

Capacity to conduct virtual recruitment (only required for project areas choosing to conduct virtual recruitment at a venue). Since virtual recruitment requires the use of social or geosocial networking apps or websites, local policy must allow project staff to use these apps or websites. In addition, project staff should have experience with social or geosocial networking apps or websites, and must be able to use these apps or websites to recruit participants for NHBS-MSM. Project areas may also need funds to pay for electronic devices, internet services, or user fees to access social or geosocial networking apps or websites. Lastly, project areas require a space, like a project office or van, to interview and HIV test participants recruited virtually.

Eligible venues where it is logistically feasible to conduct recruitment events should be classified as *accessible* venues. If project areas determine that a venue is not accessible, they should use the VDTS Program to document the reason(s) why it would not be logistically feasible to conduct recruitment events at that venue. Project areas should select from among the following reasons listed in the VDTS Program:

- Safety concerns
- Uncooperative management
- Unable to conduct HIV testing
- Inadequate space for operations
- No parking for van
- Low interview yield
- Staff availability or another staffing problem
- Unable to conduct virtual recruitment
- Other



Before project areas select “Other” for the reason why a venue is not accessible, they should discuss their rationale for using this option with their CDC project officer.

To minimize selection biases in venue-based sampling, the number of *eligible* venues that are not accessible should be small. Therefore, to ensure that a high proportion of *eligible* venues can be included in the sampling frame, project areas should develop strategies for overcoming

operational barriers related to venue accessibility during formative assessment. To aid in monitoring venue information and inform formative assessment activities, the model Venue Universe spreadsheet ([Appendix E](#)) includes a table (provided as a separate tab) that summarizes the number of *eligible* and *accessible* venues, and the percent accessible by venue category. See **Section 3.6B** of this manual for more information about the Summary Table.

Dividing a single accessible venue into multiple accessible venues

Some *accessible* venues have certain events that are frequented primarily by specific MSM subpopulations. For example, a dance club may have a “Hip Hop Night” frequented mostly by Black MSM or a “Latin Night” frequented mostly by Hispanic/Latino MSM. Project areas that have had difficulty enrolling a diverse sample of participants during previous NHBS-MSM cycles may divide a single *accessible* venue into multiple *accessible* venues to improve enrollment among important MSM subpopulations, such as those disproportionately affected by HIV. For example, a project area has a high rate of HIV infection among Black MSM, but they enrolled few Black MSM during the previous NHBS-MSM cycle because their locality has few venues frequented by Black MSM. Dance Club A in this project area’s locality has a “Hip Hop Night” frequented mostly by Black MSM. The project area could divide Dance Club A into two venues (Dance Club A and Dance Club A Hip Hop Night) to create a venue frequented mostly by Black MSM, and thereby, improve enrollment among this important MSM subpopulation.



Accessible venues that are “Street locations in gay neighborhoods” can also be divided. If the demographic characteristics of the MSM in different sections of a gay neighborhood vary substantially, project areas can divide the neighborhood and identify a street location in each section of the neighborhood that has a different MSM subpopulation.

Project areas can divide an *accessible* venue into a maximum of 3 different venues, and they must enter each one into the VDTS Program separately. To divide an *accessible* venue, project areas must provide justification and they must receive approval from their CDC project officer.

2.4C Days of Operation

During venue assessment, some additional venue information must be collected to more accurately weight the NHBS-MSM data. This information is the days of operation for each *accessible* venue. The days of operation are the days of the week when the venue is an *eligible* venue (i.e., when 50% or more of the men frequenting the venue are adult MSM). Most venues, like bars, dance clubs, restaurants, gyms, retail businesses, and sex establishments, have established days when they are open which would serve as the days of operation. Project areas could find these days posted in the venue or they could obtain them from venue management, the internet, or advertisements. For special events and the activities of social organizations, the days of operation would be the days scheduled for the event or activity.

Some venues will not meet the 50% threshold for adult MSM on all the days they are open. For these venues, the days of operation would just be those days when 50% or more of the men frequenting the venue are adult MSM. As an example, a dance club is open on weekends and promotes a “gay night” on Sundays. Accordingly, on Sunday, the dance club is frequented primarily by adult MSM, but on Friday and Saturday, it is frequented mostly by men who are not

MSM and women. Even though the dance club is open Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, its day of operation would just be Sunday since this is the only day of the week that it meets the 50% threshold for adult MSM. Similarly, a small number of venues, such as dating apps and websites, street locations in gay neighborhoods, and some sex environments, do not have established days when they are open. Project areas will therefore have to determine which days of the week 50% or more of the men frequenting the venue are adult MSM. These would then be the days of operation for the venue.

2.4D Day-Time Periods

Day-time periods are the days of the week and times that are best for conducting recruitment events at each *accessible* venue and thereby form the day-time sampling frame. Since these are the days and times when project areas could potentially conduct recruitments events, they should never select a day-time period on a day or at a time when their field staff are not available to work. Day-time periods do not have to be selected for every day a venue is open and they do not have to have the same hours each day (e.g., day-time periods for a venue could be Monday 6 PM to 10 PM and Friday 9 PM to 1 AM). Multiple day-time periods can also be selected on the same day (e.g., day-time periods for a venue could be Friday 6 PM to 10 PM and Friday 10 PM to 2 AM).

The length of a day-time period should correspond to the length of the planned recruitment event, which is usually 4 hours long. For special events and the activities of social organizations, recruitment events may be less than 4 hours if the planned activity does not last that long. Because it takes considerable time and effort to organize a recruitment event and set up operations at a venue, events should be long enough to ensure that the number of interviews obtained is worth the effort of conducting the event. On the other hand, recruitment events should not be so long that project staff become over-worked and burnt-out, especially with the irregular and late-night hours inherent in NHBS-MSM.

Project areas should consider several factors when deciding which days and times are best for conducting recruitment events at a venue. Often, days and times with the largest number of MSM frequenting the venue are ideal because they yield large numbers of potential participants. However, for project areas that interview or HIV test participants inside venues, overcrowded venues can sometimes make it logistically difficult to conduct field operations. The venue may not have sufficient space for interviewing and HIV testing during the busiest times. In addition, venue owners or managers may be concerned that field operations will be too disruptive at busy times, and may only allow recruitment events to be conducted when the venue is less crowded.

When identifying day-time periods, another important consideration is the willingness of men to participate in the survey. This may vary considerably depending on the day or time. For example, if a recruitment event is conducted at a coffee shop, very few men would probably be willing to take the survey on a weekday morning when they are rushing off to work. The early evening or weekends may be better for conducting events at such a venue. As another example, if a recruitment event is conducted at a special event, like a drag show, men will not want to take the survey during the show. In this case, the event could be conducted before or after the show. To ensure a high rate of participation in NHBS-MSM, it is essential for project areas to identify the days and times when men would be most willing to take the survey.

2.5 Ongoing Formative Assessment

As detailed in the *NHBS Formative Assessment Approach and Methods*, ongoing formative assessment is the collection and examination of additional quantitative and qualitative data to improve field operations and ensure the successful recruitment and enrollment of participants. Project areas should conduct ongoing formative assessment throughout the survey data collection period to maintain community support, identify and assess new venues, identify and overcome barriers to accessing *eligible* venues, identify and address barriers to survey participation, and monitor participant enrollment and demographic characteristics. Further guidance on conducting ongoing formative assessment for VBS and NHBS-MSM is described below and will be included in the *NHBS-MSM2023 Operations Manual*.

2.5A Updating Venues and Day-Time Periods in the VDTS Program

Project areas should continuously review their secondary data and interview primary data sources to update the venues and day-time periods listed in the VDTS Program. As new venues are identified and found to be either eligible or accessible, they should be entered into the VDTS Program. Similarly, if venues are no longer found to be eligible or accessible, their eligibility or accessibility status should be changed in the VDTS Program. Day-time periods should also be routinely updated to ensure that project areas have selected the best days and times for conducting recruitment events at each venue.

2.5B NHBS-MSM Data Monitoring

Project areas should continuously monitor their NHBS-MSM enrollment, screening, and demographic data to assess field operations and participant enrollment. Some specific problems that can be identified with these data include the following:

- **Enrollment.** Low participant enrollment may be the first sign of a barrier to survey participation and should always be followed-up with an examination of the screening rate (see below). If low enrollment at a particular venue is not due to a participation barrier that can be addressed, project areas must decide whether the venue yields enough participants to make it worthwhile to conduct recruitment events there in future months.
- **Screening.** A low screening rate (proportion of men approached for recruitment who agree to be screened for NHBS-MSM eligibility) indicates a barrier to survey participation, and thus, must be evaluated further to identify the cause and to develop a solution.
- **Demographics.** An MSM subpopulation will become underrepresented among enrollees when there is a barrier to survey participation among that subpopulation or when a project area's list of *accessible* venues lacks venues frequented by that subpopulation. In the former case, the project area must attempt to address the participation barrier; and in the latter case, the project area must make a greater effort to identify venues frequented by the underrepresented subpopulation and to gain access to those venues.

3. Formative Assessment Products

3.0 Overview

As part of the formative assessment process, project areas are required to submit the products below to document timelines, formative assessment plans and findings, and potential venues for recruitment events. The purpose and content of each of these documents is described in this section. Models for these products are provided in the *NHBS-MSM2023 Formative Assessment Workbook* or Appendices that accompany this Manual as noted in the table below.

Product	Brief Description	Workbook Worksheet(s) or Appendices	Due to CDC Project Officer
Implementation Timeline	Timeline of all major cycle milestones and benchmarks that need to be completed to start survey data collection on time. The timeline is updated as needed throughout the planning stage.	Worksheet 1	January 20
Venue Universe	A list of all the <i>potential</i> venues that a project area has identified through secondary data review and primary data collection, along with the information needed to determine venue eligibility and accessibility.	Appendix E	Biweekly starting in January, Final version due May 5
Secondary Data Review Worksheets & Secondary Data Review Findings	Summary tables that provide the local HIV context and a summary of secondary data review findings and implications for survey data collection.	Worksheets 2-9, 12	February 10
Formative Assessment Data Collection Plan	Table that outlines project area plans and methods for formative assessment.	Worksheet 10	February 17
Formative Assessment Tools	Package of materials used during formative assessment including consent forms, interview guides, and community engagement materials.	N/A	February 24
Formative Assessment Report	Set of tables focused on results of formative assessment and recommendations for survey data collection.	Worksheets 11 and 12	April 21

Note: CDC requires two weeks to review all documents.



Project areas may submit the entire Workbook for each deliverable due date with completed Worksheets that are due at that time and the others left blank. Working from one Workbook document and updating it throughout formative assessment may enhance the iterative nature of the formative process and make tracking progress over time logistically easier.

3.1 Implementation Timeline

The implementation timeline should present all activities conducted in preparation for field operations to help project areas plan and manage the process and initiate survey data collection on time. [Worksheet 1](#) of this manual contains a model Implementation Timeline for NHBS-MSM2023 that project areas can customize for local use.

The timeline should show the period when tasks will be performed and the dates when they will be completed. Project areas may choose to submit each formative assessment tool (e.g., professional key informant guide, observation tool) on a separate date; in that case project areas should add a row in the timeline for each tool with a corresponding completion date. The deadline for all formative assessment tools to be completed is February 24. The timeline should also include any other tasks that may impact formative assessment or preparation for operations, especially those tasks that have delayed the start of survey data collection in the past (where applicable). If the timeline is modified after submission, project areas should discuss the needed changes with their CDC project officer and submit a revised timeline.

3.2 Secondary Data Review Worksheets

The Secondary Data Review Worksheets provide information describing the HIV transmission and prevention context for NHBS. This product includes a set of tables described in more detail below; models can be found in the [Worksheets 2-9](#).

Project areas can customize each table in the Worksheets to add other demographic and socioeconomic variables or information important to their principal city. References should be provided as a footnote at the bottom of each table for the sources of all data included in the Secondary Data Review Worksheets.

3.2A Data Tables

Data tables summarize information from secondary data sources including US Census data for the adult population residing in each principal city of the funded MSA or MSA Division, HIV surveillance data overall and for MSM, data from previous NHBS cycles among MSM, other local research surveys, or other relevant surveillance systems (e.g., STI, monkeypox, viral hepatitis). The list of data tables is below and model table shells that project areas can use to develop these tables are included in [Worksheets 2-7](#).

Data for new HIV diagnoses in [Worksheets 3-4](#) should be restricted to those HIV cases that were reported through December 2022 and were newly diagnosed with HIV between January

2016 and December 2021. If possible, cases should be adjusted for reporting delays and cases that do not have a known HIV transmission category should be adjusted using the multiple imputation (MI) method developed by CDC’s HIV Surveillance Branch or a redistribution method developed by the local health department.

- **Worksheet 2:** Characteristics of the adult population in MSA or MSA Division
- **Worksheet 3:** New HIV diagnoses among adults in MSA or MSA Division
- **Worksheet 4:** New HIV diagnoses among MSM in MSA or MSA Division
- **Worksheet 5:** Characteristics of MSM in previous NHBS cycles in MSA or MSA Division [*if applicable*]
- **Worksheet 6:** HIV test results and HIV prevalence among MSM in previous NHBS cycles and other local studies in MSA or MSA Division [*if applicable*]
- **Worksheet 7:** Key findings from NHBS-MSM6 and MSM2021

3.2B Descriptive Tables

Descriptive tables provide a structure to summarize key contextual information to understand the local HIV policy landscape, and prevention and social service programs. Additional information is provided below, and model table shells are included in the **Worksheets 8-9**.

- **Worksheet 8:** HIV Law and Policy Landscape
- **Worksheet 9:** Key HIV and MSM Community Partners

HIV Law and Policy Landscape. This table includes key policies which impact HIV prevention in the project area, either directly (e.g., impacting service provision) or indirectly (e.g., promoting stigma), as well as those which may impact participation in NHBS. Examples include HIV criminalization laws, HIV testing policies, and legal protections for sexual minorities related to employment non-discrimination, among others. Online resources such as AIDSVu (<https://aidsvu.org/>) and CDC (<https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/policies/law/>) can help identify relevant policies that may affect NHBS participation.

Key HIV and MSM Community Partners. This table should present information about the community partners who have interest in issues affecting MSM and HIV prevention. The list should include organizations/people both with and without a defined relationship with the project area. This table should result in a list of potential professional key informants (PKIs) and characteristics/experiences of community key informants (CKIs) to inform recruitment for formative assessment interviews, as well as partners who may be interested in NHBS findings. Names of CKIs, if collected, should never be included in the table or any other document submitted to CDC.

3.2C Findings

Overall Key Findings and Implications for NHBS. The table in **Worksheet 12** summarizes key findings which could inform or impact any part of the NHBS process, including NHBS survey data collection or community engagement. Sample findings from secondary data reviews may relate to (among other issues):

- How HIV criminalization laws and other laws and policies affecting MSM may impact willingness to participate in NHBS.
- How venue closures in an area may impact MSM activities (e.g., eligible and accessible venue options for MSM recruitment).
- How robust the HIV prevention community is in the area (e.g., number of service providers/CBOs, clinics, planning councils).

Project areas should review secondary data compiled in [Worksheets 2-9](#) and identify any relevant findings and implications to be documented in the Findings worksheet ([Worksheet 12](#)). Findings should be presented in the “Secondary data review finding” column of [Worksheet 12](#). The same Findings worksheet will be used to add a summary of findings from primary formative data as part of the Formative Assessment Data Report (described in more detail in [Section 3.5](#)). Findings from the review of secondary data that identify gaps in data or topics that will require further investigation during primary formative data collection (e.g., in CKI interviews) should be reflected in the objectives and formative questions in the Formative Assessment Data Collection Plan (described in [Section 3.3](#)).

3.3 Formative Assessment Data Collection Plan

Project areas must develop a plan for formative assessment data collection that identifies:

- 1) the most important gaps in knowledge for data collection in the field, including implementation of VBS among MSM, interviewing and HIV testing;
- 2) the formative assessment methods and data sources they will use to collect the information (e.g., key informant interviews, focus groups, observations, enumerations, and brief intercept surveys).

The plan should be informed by findings from the secondary data review and discussed with the project area’s CDC project officer during regular calls. Project officer approval of the plan is required prior to starting primary data collection activities. Formative assessment tools should be developed in parallel to address objectives of the plan (see [Section 3.4](#)) but these can be submitted separately at a later time (see [Section 3.1](#)). Some formative assessment tools may need to be developed before the formative assessment plan depending on local IRB processes which should be discussed with the project area’s CDC project officer. [Worksheet 10](#) provides a model formative assessment plan. Formative assessment methods are discussed in detail in the *Formative Assessment Approach and Methods in NHBS* document.

3.4 Formative Assessment Tools

Formative Assessment Tools include all documents that are part of the IRB submission (if applicable) for formative assessment, and/or those that will be used with participants. These should be submitted to the CDC project officer for review prior to IRB submission (if applicable). These may include:

- Consent Forms for the types of interviews implemented: PKI/CKI/Focus Group (see the *NHBS Round 7 Model Surveillance Protocol*)
- Brief Intercept Survey Forms
- Observation Forms
- Interview Guides for the types of interviews implemented: PKI/CKI/Focus Group ([Appendix A](#) provides sample questions)
- Formative Assessment Recruitment Materials

3.5 Formative Assessment Data Report

The Formative Assessment Data Report summarizes key findings from the formative assessment activities and outlines their implications for NHBS operations. To fulfill this deliverable, project areas will submit a package of tables with all the formative assessment information. This includes the following informational tables:

Formative Assessment Final Methods. Include information about the specific methods that were used during formative assessment (e.g., PKI interviews, CKI interviews, focus groups, observations, enumerations, brief intercept surveys), along with the relevant demographic data about the participants. [Worksheet 11](#) provides a model that may be modified as needed.

Overall Key Findings and Implications for NHBS. After primary formative data collection is completed, the Findings Worksheet ([Worksheet 12](#)) should be updated with all findings on the topics below. Findings should be presented in the “Primary data collection finding” column of [Worksheet 12](#). If a primary data collection finding is similar or relevant to a secondary data review finding, it should be listed on the same row as the secondary data review finding and the implications should be updated as needed. For example, if the secondary data review finding is relevant in that it contradicts a primary data collection finding, this should be addressed when discussing the implications for survey data collection, ongoing formative assessment, or other implications. Project areas should ensure that all information is complete and comprehensive, and that the table includes all the key information learned from formative assessment and how it impacts NHBS, including survey data collection, testing, ongoing formative assessment, and data dissemination. The Findings Worksheet is not an analysis tool; the worksheet should be used to summarize the conclusive findings from all formative assessment activities. The following key topic areas should be addressed in the Findings Worksheet.

Population of Interest

Project areas should:

- Assess the feasibility of recruiting MSM from different subpopulations.
- Identify any subpopulations that may be disproportionately affected by HIV and whether some subpopulations will be prioritized during data collection, and why.
- Investigate perceptions of HIV in the community, both from community members and clinicians who treat MSM.

MSM Neighborhood Characteristics

Project areas should identify gay neighborhoods or neighborhoods where large numbers of MSM live. Project areas should present relevant findings regarding neighborhood characteristics, such as demographic characteristics of residents and access to HIV services.

Venue Identification

Project areas should summarize findings on the potential venues frequented by MSM, including gaps in identified venues (e.g., missing venues attended by a specific subpopulation of MSM) or changes in venue availability from previous NHBS-MSM cycles.

Venue Logistics

Project areas should list any findings that may inform the operations for data collection at potential venues, such as use of mobile vans, role of the recruiter, and testing procedures.

Incentives

Project areas should explore the type and amount of incentive appropriate for NHBS-MSM2023. Project areas should also explore what other tokens of appreciation may be distributed during data collection (e.g., snacks, public transportation voucher for in-person interviews and testing conducted by appointment after the event).

Field Staff Characteristics

Project areas should investigate what staff characteristics would be well-received by participants and help build rapport. Project areas should explore the importance of having MSM employed as field staff, as well as staff characteristics or behaviors that would deter someone from participating. The interaction between the interviewer in particular and the participant can affect the overall impression of the project.

Participant Referrals

Each project area should explore appropriate referrals for services that can be provided to participants after completing the survey and HIV test. These referrals can be for a variety of services, including HIV prevention, health care, and social services. Those interviewed during formative assessment can provide input on what referrals would be valuable to MSM.

Barriers to Potential Participation: In-Person Venue Recruitment, HIV Testing, STI Testing, and Virtual Venue Recruitment

Project areas should explore potential barriers to recruitment and survey participation for the population of interest. Project areas should also describe any factors that may adversely affect their ability to effectively conduct field operations or enroll a diverse sample of participants. Examples include safety concerns at venues, or logistical barriers to blood-based HIV testing. Additionally, barriers may exist that hamper the ability to recruit a sample using VBS, such as resistance to in-person participation or lack of trust from the community.

For each barrier identified, project areas should describe how they plan to overcome that obstacle during data collection. If there are potential barriers that cannot be resolved, project areas should explain why the barriers are insurmountable.

Participation barriers may include those that may be unique to a specific subpopulation. For example, primary data collection may reveal that the proposed incentive level may not provide sufficient motivation for participation by MSM with high socioeconomic status.

Data Dissemination: Forums for Dissemination and Topics to Prioritize for Dissemination

Plans for use and dissemination of NHBS-MSM2023 data should be explored before data collection begins. In discussions with MSM and community partners, project areas should identify organizations that will partner in efforts to share findings and investigate the most effective ways of disseminating results to the broader communities.

3.6 Venue Universe and Summary Table

On a bi-weekly basis (starting in January), project areas must submit the latest versions of their Venue Universe and Summary Table to their CDC project officer for review. The purpose of this review is to help project areas compile a comprehensive list of venues for conducting recruitment events. Prior to creating their initial recruitment calendar, project areas must submit the final version of their Venue Universe and Summary Table to their CDC project officer for approval.

3.6A Venue Universe

As described in **Section 2.3** of this manual, the Venue Universe is a listing of all the *potential* venues that a project area has identified through secondary data review and primary data collection, along with the information needed to determine venue eligibility and accessibility. **Appendix E** of this manual contains a model Venue Universe that project areas can customize for local use. Although many of the variables on the Venue Universe are optional, project areas are required to include the following:

- Venue name
- Venue category
- Whether the venue meets the criteria for an *eligible* venue (i.e., 50% or more of the men frequenting the venue are adult MSM)
- Whether there are safety concerns at the venue (only required for *eligible* venues)
- If applicable, whether the venue owner or manager has given permission to conduct NHBS-MSM (only required for *eligible* venues)
- Whether enough MSM frequent the venue to make it worthwhile to conduct recruitment events there (only required for *eligible* venues)
- If applicable, whether the venue has adequate space for recruiting, interviewing, and HIV testing (only required for *eligible* venues)

- If applicable, whether the venue has parking for a van (only required for *eligible* venues)
- Whether the venue meets the criteria for an *accessible* venue (i.e., it is logistically feasible to conduct recruitment events at the venue) (only required for *eligible* venues)
- Whether recruitment will be conducted in-person or virtually (only required for *accessible* venues)
- Days of operation (only required for *accessible* venues)

3.6B Venue Summary Table

The Venue Summary Table tabulates the number of *eligible* venues in each venue category, as well as the number that are accessible. This table enables project areas to more readily monitor the variety of venues they have identified and their ability to gain access to these venues. Project areas should obtain the information needed to complete the table from their Venue Universe. The second tab of **Appendix E** of this manual contains the Venue Summary Table, which should not be modified.



Because recruiting from “Dating applications and websites” is optional for project areas, this venue category is not included on the Venue Summary Table.

Appendix A Model Formative Assessment Topics and Interview Questions

Below is a list of model formative assessment topics and interview questions that project areas can use to develop interview guides and brief intercept surveys. Project areas should adapt the questions to the type of interview being conducted and to the background of the individual(s) being interviewed. Project areas can also modify the questions to focus on MSM subpopulations, like young MSM.



The example interview questions use the term MSM. When interviewing community members and other non-professionals, project areas should replace “MSM” with “gay and bisexual men” or some other locally-acceptable term.

Before interviewing each source, project areas should briefly describe NHBS, including the venue-based sampling (VBS) method.

A.1 Identifying MSM Neighborhoods

To identify venues that are classified as “Street locations in gay neighborhoods,” project areas should first determine which sections of their locality are considered gay neighborhoods or have high concentrations of MSM residents.

- Are there any gay neighborhoods in *[project area]*?
 - *If yes:* Where are the gay neighborhoods located?
 - *For each gay neighborhood identified:* What are the races or ethnicities of the MSM who live in *[name of gay neighborhood]*?
 - *If no:* Are there any neighborhoods or areas of *[project area]* where large numbers of MSM live?
 - *For each neighborhood or area identified:* What are the races or ethnicities of the MSM who live in *[name of neighborhood or area]*?

A.2 Identifying and Assessing Venues

Identifying venues

When interviewing a primary data source about *potential* venues, project areas should show the source a list of *potential* venues organized by venue category and then ask the source to identify additional venues in each category (see **Section 2.3** of this manual):

- Here is a list of *[venue category]* frequented by MSM. **[Show list of venues in category.]** Are there any other *[venue category]* in *[project area]* where we could recruit MSM to participate in our survey?

For example: Here is a list of bars frequented by MSM. [Show list of bars.] Are there any other bars in City A where we could recruit MSM to participate in our survey?

For some venue categories, it may be necessary to provide an explanation of the types of venues in that category:

- *Ballroom community*: The “Ballroom community” consists of social groups called *houses* that function much like extended families and are composed of predominantly Black and Hispanic/Latino LGBTQ+ people. Houses are best known for sponsoring fashion and dance competitions called *balls*, and as a result, they are often referred to as the ballroom community. “Ballroom community” includes houses, as well as any events they may sponsor, such as balls. Here is a list of ballroom community venues frequented by MSM. **[Show list of ballroom community venues.]** Are there any other ballroom community venues in *[project area]* where we could recruit MSM to participate in our survey?
- *Social organizations*: Social organizations include any type of club for LGBTQ+ people. These clubs could be athletic, artistic, fandom, gaming, professional, political, religious, or educational. Here is a list of social organizations frequented by MSM. **[Show list of social organizations.]** Are there any other social organizations in *[project area]* where we could recruit MSM to participate in our survey?
 - *For project areas planning to recruit virtually from social organizations*: **[Show list of social organizations.]** We are interested in learning which social organizations have a social media presence, meaning they have an account or profile on social media pages and websites such as Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter. Which social media pages and websites are used by each of these social organizations?
- *Sex establishments and environments*: Sex establishments and environments are bathhouses, sex clubs, adult bookstores and theaters, and other cruising areas used by MSM for sexual activity. Here is a list of sex establishments and environments frequented by MSM. **[Show list of sex establishments and environments.]** Are there any other sex establishments and environments in *[project area]* where we could recruit MSM to participate in our survey?

Since recruitment from dating applications and websites is optional for project areas, they should ask about venues in this category only if they plan on recruiting from them:

- Here is a list of dating (or hookup) apps and websites used by MSM. **[Show list of dating applications and websites.]** Are there any other dating (or hookup) apps and websites used by MSM in *[project area]* where they could be recruited to participate in our survey?
 - Which dating (or hookup) apps and websites are the most popular among *[MSM/specific MSM subpopulation]* in *[project area]*?

Assessing venues

For each new *potential* venue identified, project areas should ask:

- Are the men who frequent *[venue name]* mostly MSM or do heterosexual or straight men frequent it too?

- Are the MSM who frequent *[venue name]* mostly MSA residents or are they from outside the MSA?
 - Are there certain days and times when most of the MSM who frequent *[venue name]* are MSA residents? If so, what are they?
- What is the age range of the MSM who frequent *[venue name]*?
- What is the race or ethnicity of the MSM who frequent *[venue name]*?
- Will we face any safety problems at *[venue name]*?
- Will we face any barriers accessing *[venue name]*?
 - *If yes:* What suggestions do you have for overcoming these barriers?
- Will we face any barriers to recruiting MSM at *[venue name]*?
 - *If yes:* What suggestions do you have for overcoming these barriers?
- ***If applicable***, will we face any barriers to interviewing or HIV testing MSM at *[venue name]*?
 - *If yes:* What suggestions do you have for overcoming these barriers?
- Which days and times do most MSM frequent *[venue name]*?
 - Are there any days or times when a specific MSM subpopulation frequents *[venue name]*?

A.3 *Garnering Community Support*

Project areas can modify these questions for local use to identify collaborators and to identify other programs or organizations with similar research or services.

Identifying collaborators

- Who are the community leaders among *[MSM]*?
 - Do they represent any specific subpopulations? *If yes:* What subpopulations do they represent?
- Which key individuals or groups provide services to *[MSM]*?
 - Do they provide services to any specific subpopulations? *If yes:* To which subpopulations do they provide services?
- Which key individuals or groups advocate for issues affecting *[MSM]*?
 - Do they advocate for any specific subpopulations? *If yes:* For what subpopulations do they advocate?
- Which key individuals or groups could advocate for our survey?
 - Who could promote our survey among *[MSM/specific MSM subpopulation]*?
 - Who could promote our survey among venue owners and managers?
 - Who could promote our survey among community leaders, service providers, and advocates?

- What is the best way for us to gain support for our survey?
 - What is the best way for us to gain support from *[MSM/specific MSM subpopulation]*?
 - What is the best way for us to gain support from venue owners and managers?
 - What is the best way for us to gain support from community leaders, service providers, and advocates?
- What study findings would be beneficial to you or your organization?
 - Who would be interested in learning the findings from our survey?
 - How should we share the findings from our survey?

Establishing collaborations

- Is your program or organization currently conducting research among *[MSM/specific MSM subpopulation]* in *[project area]*?
 - *If yes:* How can we coordinate so that we are not operating in the same venues at the same time?
- Does your program or organization conduct prevention outreach or provide other health care or social services to *[MSM/specific MSM subpopulation]* in *[project area]*?
 - *If yes:* How can we collaborate so that appropriate referrals are provided to participants in our survey?
 - *If yes:* How can we coordinate our activities so that the projects can support each other?

A.4 Identifying and Addressing Barriers to Survey Participation

Project areas can modify these questions for local use to identify barriers to survey participation and, HIV testing, and if applicable, sexually transmitted infection (STI) testing. Whenever a primary data source identifies a barrier to survey participation, project areas should follow-up and ask the source to propose a solution to overcome that barrier.

General

- What are the barriers to *[MSM]* participating in our survey?
 - What suggestions do you have for overcoming these barriers?
- Are there any barriers to survey participation that are specific to any subpopulations?
 - What suggestions do you have for overcoming these barriers?
- Are there any barriers to survey participation that are specific to certain venues or venue categories?
 - What suggestions do you have for overcoming these barriers?

- What challenges have you encountered when working with *[MSM/specific MSM subpopulation]*? (e.g., trust, HIV testing, incentive type or amount, community support, accessing MSM subpopulations)?
 - How do you think these challenges will affect the success of our survey?
 - What suggestions do you have for overcoming these challenges?
- How can we foster trust among *[MSM/specific MSM subpopulation]*?
- How can we motivate *[MSM/specific MSM subpopulation]* to participate in our survey?

HIV testing and blood specimen storage

- What are the barriers to *[MSM]* participating in HIV testing?
 - What are the barriers to being tested in a venue?
 - What are the barriers for being tested *[in testing location other than venue]*?
 - What are the barriers to using *[testing method]* HIV tests?
 - What suggestions do you have for overcoming barriers to HIV testing among *[MSM/specific MSM subpopulation]*?
- In addition to the HIV test, we plan on collecting blood specimens for storage for future tests, such as tests for HIV viral load, recent HIV infection, and antiretroviral drugs. Blood specimens will be collected with a fingerstick and saved on a card. Because the study is anonymous, we will not be able to return results from any future tests to participants.
 - How will the collection of blood specimens for long-term storage and future testing be perceived by *[MSM/specific MSM subpopulation]*?
 - What are the barriers to agreeing to provide blood specimens for long-term storage and future testing? What suggestions do you have for overcoming these barriers?

For project areas that plan on offering STI tests

Formative assessment for STI testing includes questions about current STI specimens (oral and anal swabs) and the feasibility of collecting other STI specimens such as urine in the future.

- In addition to the HIV test, we plan to offer STI testing. This will include oral and anal swab collection and may include urine collection for gonorrhea and chlamydia tests.

- How will these tests affect participation in our survey?

If negatively: Please describe the specific barriers to participation. What suggestions do you have for overcoming these barriers?

If positively: Please describe specific ways these additional tests will motivate MSM to participate.

- We will be using self-collected swabs to collect oral and anal specimens for gonorrhea and chlamydia testing.
 - What are the barriers to using swabs to collect oral specimens in a venue? What suggestions do you have for overcoming these barriers?
 - What are the barriers to using swabs to collect anal specimens in a venue? What suggestions do you have for overcoming these barriers?
 - Would MSM be willing to collect their own anal specimens in a venue bathroom?
 - Would MSM be willing to collect their own anal specimens while inside/outside a venue, but behind a privacy curtain or in an enclosed private space (e.g., pop-up tent)?
 - What would be an appropriate incentive amount for providing oral and anal specimens for gonorrhea and chlamydia testing?
- We are interested in learning more about the feasibility and acceptability of using self-collection cups to collect urine specimens for gonorrhea and chlamydia testing.
 - What are the barriers to using cups with lids to collect urine specimens in a venue? What suggestions do you have for overcoming these barriers?
 - Would MSM be willing to collect their own urine specimens in a venue bathroom? Why or why not?
 - Would MSM be willing to collect their own urine specimens in another bathroom space outside of the venue (e.g., portable toilet, van bathroom)? Why or why not?
 - What would be an appropriate incentive amount for providing urine specimens for gonorrhea and chlamydia testing?
- Gonorrhea and chlamydia test results will be available 1-2 weeks after testing.
 - What are some potential strategies for anonymously returning test results to MSM?
 - Would MSM feel comfortable receiving test results over the phone? A security question would be used to determine that the person on the phone is the participant.

If yes: Would MSM prefer to call to obtain their results or would they prefer to have a project staff member call them?

If yes: Would MSM be willing to provide their phone numbers for staff to call them with their results? Phone numbers would remain in a locked filing cabinet in the project office and a security question would be asked to determine that the person on the phone is the participant. Documents with phone numbers would be destroyed at the end of the study.
 - What are motivators to encourage MSM to receive their STI results?
 - Would MSM prefer to be called with their test results regardless of the test results or only if they have a positive test result?

- MSM with positive gonorrhea and chlamydia test results will be referred for care and treatment.
 - What are some potential strategies for anonymously linking MSM to STI care and treatment?
 - Where would MSM feel comfortable going for STI care and treatment?
 - Where would MSM feel uncomfortable going for STI care and treatment?
 - We would like to set up an anonymous referral system to allow MSM with positive STI test results to obtain same-day treatment. Which clinics, physicians, or health department staff could work with us to develop this anonymous referral system?
 - Which clinics have protocols that require retesting at time of treatment?

A.5 Exploring Field Operations

Project areas can modify these questions for local use to ensure successful field operations by identifying acceptable incentives for the survey and HIV test; determining ideal staff characteristics; developing the most effective recruitment messages; and identifying which local prevention, health care, and social services are available for making referrals and linkages to care.

Incentives

- We will give participants an incentive for completing the survey and another incentive for taking the HIV test. The survey takes approximately 40 minutes to complete and the HIV test, 20 minutes. What would appropriate incentive amounts be for each?
- What type of incentive, like cash, Visa gift card, or retail gift card, would be most desirable to the participants?

Staffing

- What criteria should we consider when hiring survey staff to work with *[MSM/specific MSM subpopulation]*?
- What are the characteristics of the ideal interviewer for this project?
- The recruiter is the staff member who approaches men at the venues and invites them to participate in the survey. What are the characteristics of the ideal recruiter for this project?

In-person recruitment

- When approaching MSM at venues, our staff plan on using this script to invite them to participate in the survey. **[Show recruiter script.]** Do you think this script will be effective at encouraging MSM to participate in the survey?
 - Do you have any suggestions for improving the script?

Virtual recruitment on dating applications and websites (if applicable)

- How would MSM feel about being contacted by our staff while using dating (or hookup) apps and websites?
 - How can we address any issues MSM may have about being contacted by our staff?
 - When we contact MSM on dating (or hookup) apps and websites, what can we do to make it clear that NHBS is legitimate and not a scam?
- When contacting MSM on dating (or hookup) apps and websites, our staff plan on sending this message to invite them to participate in the survey. **[Show recruiter message.]** Do you think this message will be effective at encouraging MSM to participate in the survey?
 - Do you have any suggestions for improving the message?
- When we create a profile on a dating (or hookup) app or website to recruit MSM, what can we do to make the profile look appealing?
 - What type of information should we include on the profile?

Virtual recruitment at social organizations (if applicable)

- How would MSM feel about being contacted by our staff through social media?
 - How can we address any issues MSM may have about being contacted by our staff?
 - When we contact MSM on social media, what can we do to make it clear that NHBS is legitimate and not a scam?
- When contacting MSM on social media, our staff plan on sending this message to invite them to participate in the survey. **[Show recruiter message.]** Do you think this message will be effective at encouraging MSM to participate in the survey?
 - Do you have any suggestions for improving the message?
- When we create a profile on social media to recruit MSM, what can we do to make the profile look appealing?
 - What type of information should we include on the profile?

Local prevention and social services

- We provide referrals to our survey participants for a variety of HIV prevention, health care, and social services. What HIV prevention, health care, or social service information would be most helpful to provide to **[MSM/specific MSM subpopulation]**?
- We also provide linkage to HIV care and treatment services. For participants who test positive for HIV, where would **[MSM/specific MSM subpopulation]** feel comfortable going for HIV care and treatment?

Names of government-sponsored insurance plans

- Information on health insurance programs is collected to help interviewers learn state or local names for Medicaid or other common government-sponsored insurance plans.
 - Are there acronyms or local names for Medicaid? What about for other common government-sponsored insurance plans?

Appendix B NHBS-MSM2023 Formative Assessment Workbook

Appendix B – NHBS-MSM2023 Formative Assessment Workbook is composed of model tables for each of the required formative assessment products and can be found in the Excel file accompanying this document.

Appendix C Count Form

C.1 Count Form

A model Count Form is shown below. The actual form can be printed or modified using the Word file named **Appendix C – Count Form.docx**.

Count Form	
Section 1 – For Type 1 and Type 2 Enumerations	
Venue: _____	
Counter: _____	
Enumeration Type: 1 2	
Date: ____ / ____ / ____	
Start Time: ____ : ____ AM PM	
End Time*: ____ : ____ AM PM	
Enumeration Period*: _____ minutes	
Count: _____	
Standardized Count*: _____	
Section 2 – For Type 2 Enumerations	
Number Interviewed or Reviewed: _____	
Number Adult MSM: _____	Percent Adult MSM: _____
Number Eligible: _____	Percent Eligible: _____
Eligible Count: _____	
Formulas for Calculations	
<i>Enumeration Period* = End Time – Start Time</i>	
<i>Standardized Count* = (Count X 240 minutes) / Enumeration Period</i>	
<i>Percent Adult MSM = Number Adult MSM / Number Interviewed or Reviewed</i>	
<i>Percent Eligible = Number Eligible / Number Interviewed or Reviewed</i>	
For In-person: <i>Eligible Count = Standardized Count X Percent Eligible</i>	
For Virtual: <i>Eligible Count = Count X Percent Eligible</i>	
*ONLY for In-person Enumerations	

Project areas can use the information collected on the Count Form to assess their venues for eligibility and accessibility, as well as to determine the best days and times for conducting recruitment events at the venues. For example, the Percent Adult MSM, which is the proportion of men interviewed who are adult MSM, can help project areas determine if a venue can be classified as an *eligible* venue because 50% or more of the men frequenting the venue are adult MSM. As another example, the Eligible Count, which is an estimate of the number of men frequenting a venue in a 4-hour period who meet the NHBS-MSM eligibility criteria, can help project areas decide whether a venue should be classified as an *accessible* venue because enough eligible MSM frequent the venue to make it worthwhile to conduct recruitment events there.

C.2 Instructions

These instructions should be used by project areas for both in-person enumerations and virtual enumerations. For *in-person enumerations*, project areas should obtain a count of the men who are at the venue or who enter the venue during the enumeration period; for *virtual enumerations at venues that are “Dating applications and websites,”* project areas should obtain a count of the profiles of men who are online using the venue’s app or website at the time of the enumeration; and for *virtual enumerations at venues that are “Social organizations,”* project areas should obtain a count of the profiles of men who are members of the venue’s app or website at the time of the enumeration, regardless of whether they are online.

Section 1

Project areas should complete Section 1 of the Count Form for both Type 1 and Type 2 Enumerations. The information needed for each data field in the section is described below.

Venue. The name of the venue where the enumeration is being conducted.

Counter. The name of the staff member responsible for conducting the enumeration.

Enumeration Type. Whether a Type 1 or Type 2 Enumeration is being conducted.

Date. The month, day, and year that the enumeration is being conducted.

Start Time. The hour and minute that the counter is *ready* to begin counting. For *in-person enumerations*, the Start Time may occur before the first man is counted.

End Time. (Only required for in-person enumerations) The hour and minute that the counter is instructed to no longer count men frequenting the venue. The End Time may occur after the last man is counted.

Enumeration Period. (Only required for in-person enumerations) The total number of minutes that counting occurs. The Enumeration Period is usually between 30 and 60 minutes, and is calculated by subtracting the Start Time from the End Time. For example, if the Start Time is 8:10 PM and the End Time is 8:50 PM, then the Enumeration Period = (8:50 PM – 8:10 PM) = 40 minutes.

Count. For *in-person enumerations*, the total number of individuals counted who appear to be male and ≥ 18 years of age; and for *virtual enumerations*, the total number of profiles counted that belong to individuals who appear to be male and ≥ 18 years of age.

Standardized Count. (Only required for in-person enumerations) The estimated number of adult men who are expected to frequent the venue during a 4-hour period, which is the typical duration of a recruitment event. The Standardized Count is calculated by multiplying the count by 240 minutes (the number of minutes in 4 hours) and then dividing the product by the Enumeration Period. For example, if 20 men are counted during a 40-minute Enumeration Period, the Standardized Count = $(20 \text{ men}) \times (240 \text{ minutes}) / (40 \text{ minutes}) = 120 \text{ men}$. An estimated 120 adult men are therefore expected to frequent the venue during a 4-hour period.

Section 2

Project areas should only complete Section 2 of the Count Form for Type 2 Enumerations. Some of the information needed for this section must be obtained from the Enumeration Form(s) used during eligibility interviews or profile reviews (see **Appendix D** of this manual). Each data field in the section is described below.

Number Interviewed or Reviewed. For *in-person enumerations*, the total number of individuals counted who completed brief eligibility interviews; and for *virtual enumerations*, the total number of profiles counted that were reviewed for eligibility. This number must be obtained from the Enumeration Form(s).

Number Adult MSM. For *in-person enumerations*, the total number of individuals counted who completed interviews and are adult MSM; and for *virtual enumerations*, the total number of profiles counted that were reviewed and belong to adult MSM. This number must also be obtained from the Enumeration Form(s).

Percent Adult MSM. For *in-person enumerations*, the proportion of individuals counted who completed interviews and are adult MSM; and for *virtual enumerations*, the proportion of profiles counted that were reviewed and belong to adult MSM. The Percent Adult MSM is calculated by dividing the Number Adult MSM by the Number Interviewed or Reviewed. For example, if 12 men are interviewed in-person at a venue and 9 are adult MSM, then the Percent Adult MSM = $(9 \text{ adult MSM interviewed}) / (12 \text{ men interviewed}) = 75\% \text{ adult MSM}$. Since 75% of the men interviewed are adult MSM, one can estimate that 75% of the men frequenting the venue are adult MSM also.

Number Eligible. For *in-person enumerations*, the total number of individuals counted who completed interviews and meet the NHBS-MSM eligibility criteria; and for *virtual enumerations*, the total number of profiles counted that were reviewed and belong to individuals who meet the NHBS-MSM eligibility criteria. This number must be obtained from the Enumeration Form(s).

Percent Eligible. For *in-person enumerations*, the proportion of individuals counted who completed interviews and meet the NHBS-MSM eligibility criteria; and for *virtual enumerations*, the proportion of profiles counted that were reviewed and belong to individuals who meet the NHBS-MSM eligibility criteria. The Percent Eligible is calculated by dividing the Number Eligible by the Number Interviewed or Reviewed. For example, if 12 men are interviewed in-person at a venue and 6 meet the NHBS-MSM eligibility criteria, then the Percent Eligible = (6 eligible men interviewed) / (12 men interviewed) = 50% eligible. Since 50% of the men interviewed are eligible to participate in NHBS-MSM, one can estimate that 50% of the men frequenting the venue are eligible to participate as well.

Eligible Count. For *in-person enumerations*, the Eligible Count is the estimated number of eligible men who are expected to frequent the venue during a 4-hour period, and it is calculated by multiplying the *Standardized Count* by the Percent Eligible. For example, if the Standardized Count is 120 men and the Percent Eligible is 50%, then the Eligible Count = (120 men) X (50% eligible) = 60 eligible men. An estimated 60 eligible men are therefore expected to frequent the venue during a 4-hour period. For *virtual enumerations*, the Eligible Count is the estimated number of profiles that are expected to belong to eligible men who frequent the venue, and it is calculated by multiplying the *Count* by the Percent Eligible. For example, if the Count is 400 profiles belonging to men and the Percent Eligible is 50%, then the Eligible Count = (400 profiles belonging to men) X (50% eligible) = 200 profiles belonging to eligible men. An estimated 200 profiles are therefore expected to belong to eligible men who frequent the venue.

Appendix D Enumeration Form

D.1 Enumeration Form

A model Enumeration Form is shown below. The actual form can be printed or modified using the Excel file named **Appendix D – Enumeration Form.xlsx**. During *in-person Type 2 Enumerations*, the Enumeration Form should be used to collect responses to the brief eligibility interviews; and during *virtual Type 2 Enumerations*, the form should be used to record information collected from the profile reviews. At the end of each enumeration, project areas should tally the number of individuals who completed an interview or had their profiles reviewed, the number of individuals who are adult MSM, and the number of individuals who meet the NHBS-MSM eligibility criteria. The totals should then be recorded on the Count Form (see **Appendix C** of this manual).



For *virtual enumerations*, project areas should not contact individuals and conduct brief eligibility interviews online. Instead, they should just review the profiles of individuals who use an app or website, and collect any needed eligibility or demographic information from the profiles.

Enumeration Form									
Venue: _____			Interviewer or Reviewer: _____			Date: ____ / ____ / ____			
Interview or Profile Data							Summary Data		
#	Age	Gender	Race/Ethnicity	MSA Resident	Sex with a Woman	Sex with a Man	Completed Questions	Adult MSM	NHBS Eligible
1		M W O U	A B H N W U	Y N U	Y N U	Y N U	Y N	Y N	Y N
2		M W O U	A B H N W U	Y N U	Y N U	Y N U	Y N	Y N	Y N
3		M W O U	A B H N W U	Y N U	Y N U	Y N U	Y N	Y N	Y N
4		M W O U	A B H N W U	Y N U	Y N U	Y N U	Y N	Y N	Y N
5		M W O U	A B H N W U	Y N U	Y N U	Y N U	Y N	Y N	Y N
6		M W O U	A B H N W U	Y N U	Y N U	Y N U	Y N	Y N	Y N
7		M W O U	A B H N W U	Y N U	Y N U	Y N U	Y N	Y N	Y N
8		M W O U	A B H N W U	Y N U	Y N U	Y N U	Y N	Y N	Y N
9		M W O U	A B H N W U	Y N U	Y N U	Y N U	Y N	Y N	Y N
10		M W O U	A B H N W U	Y N U	Y N U	Y N U	Y N	Y N	Y N
11		M W O U	A B H N W U	Y N U	Y N U	Y N U	Y N	Y N	Y N
12		M W O U	A B H N W U	Y N U	Y N U	Y N U	Y N	Y N	Y N
13		M W O U	A B H N W U	Y N U	Y N U	Y N U	Y N	Y N	Y N
14		M W O U	A B H N W U	Y N U	Y N U	Y N U	Y N	Y N	Y N
15		M W O U	A B H N W U	Y N U	Y N U	Y N U	Y N	Y N	Y N

Page (circle one): 1 2 3 4 5

D.2 Instructions

Enumeration data

Project areas should complete the data fields on the Enumeration Form that identify the enumeration being conducted. The information needed for each field is described below.

Venue. The name of the venue where the enumeration is being conducted.

Interviewer or Reviewer. For *in-person enumerations*, the name of the staff member who conducts the brief eligibility interviews; and for *virtual enumerations*, the name of the staff member who reviews the profiles for eligibility.

Date. The month, day, and year that the enumeration is being conducted.

Page. The page number for each Enumeration Form used by an interviewer or reviewer. Each interviewer or reviewer should circle “1” for the first form used, “2” for the second form used, and so on for as many forms as the interviewer or reviewer uses during the enumeration.

Interview or profile data

Project areas should use the table on the Enumeration Form to record the responses to the brief eligibility interviews during in-person enumerations or to record the information collected from the profile reviews during virtual enumerations. Each column of the table corresponds to a different question and each row represents a different individual interviewed or profile reviewed. The text of the questions and the instructions for recording the answers are listed below. For *in-person enumerations*, the interviewer should circle or record “U” (unknown) for a question if an individual refuses to answer the question or does not know the answer to it; and for *virtual enumerations*, the reviewer should circle or record “U” (unknown) for a question if the answer to the question cannot be found by reviewing the profile.

Age. Question: *What is your age?* The interviewer or reviewer should record the individual’s age in the data field. For *in-person enumerations*, the interviewer should end the interview and thank the individual for his time if he is < 18 years of age; and for *virtual enumerations*, the reviewer should stop reviewing the profile if it belongs to an individual < 18 years of age.

Gender. Question: *Do you consider yourself to be a man, a woman, or another gender identity?* The interviewer or reviewer should circle “M” for man, “W” for woman, or “O” for any other gender identity.

Race/Ethnicity. This question is optional but may be useful if a project area is assessing the demographic characteristics of men frequenting the venue. Question: *What is your race or ethnicity?* The interviewer or reviewer should circle “A” for Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander; “B” for Black or African-American; “H” for Hispanic or Latino; “N” for Native American, American Indian, or Alaskan Native; or “W” for White. Multiple responses may be selected for this question.

MSA Resident. Question: *Do you currently live in the [project city] area?* The interviewer or reviewer should circle “Y” for yes or “N” for no.

Sex with a Woman. Question: *Have you ever had sex with a woman?* The interviewer or reviewer should circle “Y” for yes or “N” for no.

Sex with a Man. Question: *Have you ever had sex with a man?* The interviewer or reviewer should circle “Y” for yes or “N” for no. For *in-person enumerations*, the interviewer should indicate that the interview is done, ask the individual if he has any questions, and thank him for his time.

Summary data

Completed Questions. For *in-person enumerations*, the interviewer should circle “Y” for yes if all the questions in the brief eligibility interview are *asked* (even if the individual refuses to answer a question or does not know the answer to a question) *or* if the interview has to be ended because the individual is < 18 years of age. The interviewer should circle “N” for no if all the questions are *not asked* and the interview has to be ended for any reason other than the individual being underage. For *virtual enumerations*, the reviewer should circle “Y” for yes if the profile is *reviewed* for answers to all the profile review questions (even if the answer to a question cannot be found) *or* if the review has to be stopped because the profile belongs to an individual < 18 years of age. The reviewer should circle “N” for no if the profile is *not reviewed* for answers to all the questions, with the exception that the review has to be stopped because the profile belongs to an underage individual. For *both in-person and virtual enumerations*, the interviewer or reviewer should tally the “Y” (yes) responses to the Completed Questions field on all the Enumeration Forms used during the enumeration, and then record the total in the Number Interviewed or Reviewed field on the Count Form.

Adult MSM. The interviewer or reviewer should circle “Y” for yes if the individual is ≥ 18 years of age, is a man, *and* has ever had sex with a man (these responses are highlighted on the Enumeration Form). The interviewer or reviewer should circle “N” for no if the individual is < 18 years of age, is not a man, *or* has never had sex with a man. At the end of the enumeration, the interviewer or reviewer should tally the “Y” (yes) responses to the Adult MSM question on all the Enumeration Forms used during the enumeration, and then record the total in the Number Adult MSM field on the Count Form.

NHBS Eligible. The interviewer or reviewer should circle “Y” for yes if the individual is ≥ 18 years of age, is a man, lives in the project area, *and* has ever had sex with a man (these responses are highlighted on the Enumeration Form). The interviewer or reviewer should circle “N” for no if the individual is < 18 years of age, is not a man, does not live in the project area, *or* has never had sex with a man. At the end of the enumeration, the interviewer or reviewer should tally the “Y” (yes) responses to the NHBS Eligible question on all the Enumeration Forms used during the enumeration, and then record the total in the Number Eligible field on the Count Form.

Appendix E Model Venue Universe

The Venue Universe is described in **Chapter 2** and **Section 3.6** of this manual. A model Venue Universe (divided in two halves) is shown on the next page and the Venue Summary Table is shown on the page after that. The Excel file **Appendix E – Model Venue Universe and Summary Table.xlsx** contains the Venue Universe on the first tab and the Venue Summary Table on the second. While project areas may modify the Venue Universe to meet their local needs, they should **not** alter the Venue Summary Table.



In the model Venue Universe, all of the fields have been completed for illustrative purposes. However, project areas should only complete the fields needed to determine the eligibility and accessibility of each venue. For example, if project areas determine that a venue is not eligible (i.e., < 50% of the men frequenting the venue are adult MSM), they do not need to collect the venue information needed to assess the venue for accessibility. Similarly, once project areas have determined that a venue is not accessible (i.e., it is not logistically feasible to conduct recruitment events at the venue), they do not need to collect the days of operation or any other venue information.

Venue Universe (1st Half):

Category	Name	Recruitment Method	Eligible Venue	Accessible Venue	Address	Website	Management Contact	Phone	E-mail	Days and Hours of Operation
Ballroom Community	House of Ebony	In-person	Yes	Yes	24 Peachtree AVE	www.instagram.com/ebony	Ebony Doe	404-731-5921	ebony1@icloud.com	Meetings: Thur 8 PM-9 PM Events: Vary Each Month
Bars	Juniors	In-person	Yes	Yes	112 Peachtree ST	www.juniorsbar.com	John Doe	404-637-8746	jdoo@juniorsbar.com	Sun-Thur Noon-Midnight Fri-Sat Noon-2 AM
Cafes/Restaurants	Starbucks	In-person	No	NA	280 Peachtree CT	NA	Jane Doe	404-456-7324	NA	Sun-Sat 6 AM-10 PM
Dance Clubs	Primal	In-person	Yes	Yes	80 Peachtree HWY	www.primaldance.com	Moe Doe	404-347-8972	moed@gmail.com	Sun 9 PM-2 AM
Dating Apps/Websites	Grindr	Virtual	Yes	No	NA	www.grindr.com	NA	NA	support@grindr.com	Sun-Sat 12 AM-12 AM
Parks/Beaches	Southside Park	In-person	Yes	Yes	Peachtree BLVD & Peachtree Way	NA	NA	NA	NA	Sat-Sun 11 AM-6 PM
Sex Environments	Northside Park	In-person	Yes	No	Peachtree PKWY & Peachtree DR	NA	Sergeant Pepper 8th Precinct	404-567-7600	spepper@citypd.gov	Sun-Sat 10 PM-2 AM
Social Organizations	Strikers Bowling	Virtual	Yes	Yes	9 Peachtree CIR	www.facebook.com/strikers	Bo Doe	404-247-6232	bodo@comcast.net	Sun 1 PM-3 PM

Venue Universe (2nd Half):

Attendee Characteristics			Venue Characteristics									Comments
≥ 50% Adult MSM	Race/ethnicity	Age	Safety Concerns	Management Approval	Sufficient Attendance	Barriers to In-person Recruiting	Barriers to Virtual Recruiting	Barriers to Interviewing	Barriers to HIV Testing	Parking	High Attendance Days & Times	
Yes	Mostly African-American	All	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	During balls and other special events	House mother does not want family contacted thru their private Instagram
Yes	Mostly Latino	<30	No	Yes	Yes	No	NA	No	No	Yes	Wed-Thur 7 PM-11 PM Fri-Sat 10 PM-2 AM	
No	All	All	No	Yes	Yes	No	NA	No	No	Yes	Mon-Fri 7 AM-10 AM	Large proportion of non-MSM
Yes (Sundays)	All	<30	No	Yes	Yes	No	NA	No	No	Yes	Sun 11 PM-2 AM	Gay night on Sundays
Yes	All	All	No	NA	Yes	NA	Yes	No	No	NA	Sun 8 PM-12 AM	Due to possible sexual content on dating apps, HD does not permit their use
Yes	All	All	No	NA	Yes	No	NA	No	No	Yes	Sat-Sun Noon-4 PM	MSM sunbathe in park on weekends
Yes	Mostly White	Middle Age	Yes	NA	Yes	No	NA	No	No	Yes	Fri-Sat 11 PM-1 AM	High rates of violent crime after dark
Yes	All	Seniors	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Sun 1 PM-3 PM	Because of difficulty recruiting in-person at games, virtual recruitment will be used

NA= Not applicable.

Venue Summary Table:

Category*	Number Eligible	Number Accessible	Percent Accessible
Ballroom community			
Bars			
Cafes and restaurants			
Dance clubs			
Fitness clubs and gymnasiums			
Gay Pride and similar events			
Parks and beaches			
Raves, circuit parties, and similar events			
Retail businesses			
Sex establishments and environments			
Social organizations			
Street locations in gay neighborhoods			
Other			
Total			

*Because recruiting from “Dating applications and websites” is optional for project areas, this venue category is not included on the Venue Summary Table.