

**APPENDIX D:
READABILITY OF THE INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

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Informed consent is meant to protect respondents' rights as participants. Therefore, care was taken to write an informed consent statement for the Alaska Native Adult Tobacco Survey (AN ATS) that was understandable. The text was tested to measure its readability. Three tests used to test readability were the Fog Index, the Flesch Value, and the Flesch-Kincaid Index. The site <http://www.semantia.com.au/tools/readcal/doc.php> provides additional explanations of these three prominent readability scales.

Of the three measures, the Flesch-Kincaid Index is the most appropriate and interpretable in this circumstance. The Flesch-Kincaid Grade-Level Readability Formula was specifically designed to assess the reading level of technical documents, such as manuals and forms. The Flesch-Kincaid Value aligns with North American schools' grade-level comprehension standards. The Flesch-Kincaid Grade-Level Readability Formula is

$$GL = (11.8 * ASW) + (.39 * ASL) - 15.59,$$

where GL = U.S. grade level, ASW = average number of syllables per word, and ASL = average sentence length.

The Fog Index, Flesch Value, and Flesch-Kincaid Index score for the AN ATS informed consent form are as follows:

- Fog Index: 8.9
- Flesch Value: 73.1
- Flesch-Kincaid Index: 6.5

The Flesch-Kincaid Index score on the AN ATS informed consent form puts it at a sixth-grade reading comprehension level by North American school standards. The 8.9 level on the Fog Index puts it somewhat higher, at about a ninth-grade level.¹

¹ More information about the Flesch-Kincaid Grade-Level Readability Formula can be found in Kincaid, J. P., Fishburne, R. P., Rogers, R. L., & Chissom, B. S. (1975), *Derivation of new readability formulas (automated readability index, Fog count and Flesch reading ease formula) for Navy enlisted personnel*, Research Branch Report 8-75, Memphis, TN: Naval Air Station.