

## Interview Guide

Hello! I'm \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm with the [Name of research center].

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview today. Is this still an okay time to talk?

**[If Yes: Continue reading below]**

**[If No: Reschedule for a better time to have the interview]**

We are conducting a study to learn about how local policymakers, like yourself, make policy decisions, and how you find and use information to guide those decisions. We are interested in policies that reduce obesity disparities and improve community health. We will be interviewing local officials around the country to get their feedback. This information will help us improve ways we engage with [top elected officials/mayors | council members top | appointed officials/city managers], like yourself to promote policies that can improve community health.

The interview will take about 30 minutes. With your permission, we would like to audio record our conversation for note-taking purposes. Any information we gather will only be summarized as group information and will not be attributed to any individual.

We will gladly share what we learn with you.

You may skip any questions you do not feel comfortable answering.

Do you have any questions before we get started?

To start, I'd like to get to know a little bit more about you and about your role as a/the [position title]:

1. Briefly, what are your main responsibilities as a/the [title]?

*If they do not share about type of governance structure:* What type of government does your municipality have?

2. How long have you worked or served in local government?

*If they do not serve/work for the city/town full-time:* Are you employed? If so, what is your job or profession?

The next questions are about policies that can promote community health, and information to inform those decisions.

3. First, tell me about the general process you go through when making a decision about whether to support or oppose a health-related policy.

*Probes:*

- What are the types of information you rely on? How do you go about getting that information?

- Who are the people or organizations that you count on to provide you with trustworthy information? What makes them trustworthy?
- How do the opinions of colleagues or other policymakers influence your decision to support/oppose a policy?
- To what extent does support/opposition from constituents or other stakeholders inform your decision?

*(Additional probes, skip if addressed or running low on time)*

- How do other competing policy efforts, priorities inform your decision?
- To what extent does the social and political context influence your decision?
- When do you decide to support/oppose? [timing]

4. Now think of a recent example when you proposed or championed a health-related policy, whether it passed or didn't pass. What was the policy, and what was most helpful AND unhelpful in the effort?

*Probes:*

- What led up to this effort? How did you decide to pursue this policy?
- Who did you work with and how?
- [If information mentioned]: Who were the sources? How was it framed and presented? *Ask whether the policymaker would be willing to provide an example.*

5. I'm going to share some community data with you. [Share/read to the policymaker their community's data on disparity/ies by chronic disease condition(s) or risk factor(s).]

- a. If you were presented data like these, what would make it most useful? Appealing? Believable?
- b. These types of health differences may result from some people not having the same opportunities, based on where they live, work, go to school, or their race and ethnicity, to make choices that would allow them to live a long, healthy life. How do you view this issue and your role as a policymaker in solving it?

*Probes:*

- What would encourage key policy makers in your community to take action on issues like these?

We are interested in learning about how you work with various organizations in your area.

6. Are there any organizations and groups that you or your office/department work with on topics related to community health? We are particularly interested in your work with organizations or groups that work on the topics of obesity, nutrition or access to healthy food, and physical activity? If so, could you briefly tell me about this partnership?

*Probes:*

- If yes, which key organizations do you work with on these topics?
- How do you work with them?

We would like to understand how COVID-19 has impacted your community and policy making related to your community. (*Skip this section/questions if low on time*)

7. Current research shows that having obesity puts individuals at greater risk of getting COVID-19, and higher mortality rates when they get COVID-19, compared to those without obesity.
  - a. How has this impacted obesity-related health policies in your community?
  - b. How does this impact the likelihood of you supporting policies that address obesity disparities?

Before we end, I have a final interview question:

8. What is the single biggest policy change that would be needed to make it easier for people to lead healthier lives in your community?

Thank you, those are all my interview questions. I just have few questions about your background.

9. What is your age?
10. When it comes to SOCIAL issues, do you usually think of yourself as ...
  - a. Extremely Liberal
  - b. Liberal
  - c. Slightly Liberal
  - d. Moderate
  - e. Slightly Conservative
  - f. Conservative
  - g. Extremely Conservative
  - h. Other (Please specify)
  - i. Don't Know/Not Sure
  - j. Does not wish to answer/refused
11. When it comes to FISCAL issues, do you usually think of yourself as ...
  - a. Extremely Liberal
  - b. Liberal
  - c. Slightly Liberal
  - d. Moderate
  - e. Slightly Conservative
  - f. Conservative
  - g. Extremely Conservative
  - h. Other (Please specify)
  - i. Don't Know/Not Sure
  - j. Does not wish to answer/refused

***Those are all the questions I have for you. Do you have any questions for me? Or any final thoughts or comments you'd like to share?***

Thank you for your time and perspective. If you have any questions, contact [Name], research project manager. Have a great rest of your day!