

## Chapter 6: Interview Situations

### Topic 1: No One Home

#### Overview

Even when you plan your visits for times when people are most likely to be home, finding no one home is to be expected. In most cases, addresses in your assignment will be for occupied housing units. When no one is home, it is probably because the household members are out of the house temporarily (for work, school, vacation, and so forth) and not because the unit is vacant.

#### Procedures to Follow When No One Is Home

The first visit to a Nonresponse Followup (NRFU) address is to confirm that the address exists within the census block and whether it represents a housing unit. If it does, you must determine whether it is occupied or vacant. If it appears that the housing unit is occupied, but no one answers the door, or if you are told by a knowledgeable person that the housing unit is occupied, follow these procedures:

- Fill out and leave a D-26, *Notice of Visit*.
- Try to get the occupant's name, telephone number, and best time to call from a knowledgeable person. Do not interview a knowledgeable person for an occupied address unless the occupants are absent and not expected to return by the end of NRFU, or you have made the required attempts and have not been able to find the occupants there.
- Record any contact information you obtain in the 'Notes' section of the D-1(E), *Enumerator Questionnaire*, or EQ for short.
- Fill in the 'Record of Contact' section of the EQ by recording the outcome of your visit as 'NV'.
- If you obtain the occupant's telephone number, attempt to contact the household up to three times by telephone, if possible, before making a return personal visit.
- Make up to two additional visits to the address at different times of the day.
- If, after the allowed number of attempts or after your third personal visit, you are unable to contact an occupant of the housing unit, find a person with knowledge about the housing unit and its occupants to act as a proxy respondent, and obtain as much information as possible to complete the EQ.



**Where to Leave the D-26**

Slip the D-26 under the outside door if possible. **Do not** leave it where someone from the street could see that the housing unit is vacant or no one is home. Do not open the storm door or other doors in order to leave the form on an inside door. Try to wedge it in the crack of the outer door so that the wind cannot blow it away.

**Never place a D-26 or any other form in the occupant's mailbox.** It is against the law to open someone's mailbox.

**Contact a Knowledgeable Person for Information About the Occupant**

If no household member is present, look around for a nearby person who might be able to provide information about the best time to contact the household members. Ask the person for the occupant's name, telephone number, and a good time to find the household at home. A person who knows about the household could be a neighbor, building manager, maintenance person, and so forth.

**Do not look inside the mailbox to try to get the occupant's name and never look into windows.**

**What If the Entire Household Is Away During the NRFU Operation?**

Interviewing a proxy respondent to obtain data about household members is permissible after you make the allowed number of attempts and personal visits to interview the household. However, if at any time, you learn from a person who knows about the Census Day status of the housing unit that the entire household will be away for the duration of the NRFU operation, you may obtain a proxy interview from that person at that time. There is no point in making repeated callbacks when you know no one will be at home.