



Behavioral Interventions for Compliance Assistance: Design Report

SUMMARY

The mission of the Department of Labor's [Wage and Hour Division](#) (WHD) is to promote and achieve compliance with labor standards to protect and enhance the welfare of the nation's workforce. To help achieve this mission, WHD implements strategies to protect the workforce and assist employers with compliance. Data and research inform WHD's compliance strategies and help the agency monitor and evaluate how effectively it uses those strategies. As part of this effort, DOL's Chief Evaluation Office (CEO), in partnership with WHD, contracted with Mathematica to conduct the *Wage and Hour Division's Compliance Strategies Evaluation* to gather evidence on effective methods WHD might use to design impact evaluation studies of its compliance strategies. This study does not assess WHD's capabilities or data system themselves but focuses on potential opportunities to evaluate compliance strategies.

Behavioral Interventions for Compliance Assistance: Design Report provides intervention and evaluation designs for two behavioral intervention trials that, if implemented, would test whether webinar registrations increase when behavioral strategies are applied to emails targeting a given industry. To design the study, researchers followed a six-step process developed by DOL for designing and conducting BI studies that has resulted in trials that produce meaningful evidence. These steps include understanding areas where program performance could be improved, diagnosing the potential behavioral bottlenecks in place, and designing interventions that address those bottlenecks and evaluations to learn whether the interventions work.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Behavioral roadblocks may be preventing employers from ultimately attending WHD webinars.** Engagement drop-off ranges from the employer not noticing or opening emails about the webinar to the employer forgetting to attend the webinar after they have registered.
- **Employers may not respond to emails about webinars because they:**
 - Assume the emails are spam
 - Don't evaluate the information in the email
 - Don't feel compelled to click through to the webinar
 - Procrastinate or forget the email
- **The BI study design consists of a targeted and a national trial to test whether direct emails that use principles of behavioral science are more effective** than standard emails at increasing engagement with WHD's webinars.





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- Behavioral insights include using an engaging subject line, personalization, employing loss aversion, social norms, and reminders.
- **The proposed outcomes of the trials would be assessed using an email delivery system and webinar software that can measure open rates and click-through rates** by targeted recipients or recipients of a forwarded email.

[SEE FULL STUDY](#)

STUDY TIMEFRAME: August 2017 – July 2020
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