

# Nebraska PRAMS Guidelines for Proposals to Receive Datasets to Conduct Analyses

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Revised June 2018

## Policy on Nebraska PRAMS Data Use and Analysis

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- 1) This document refers to statistical manipulation of individual-level Nebraska PRAMS data when conducted by persons not in the direct employment of the Nebraska PRAMS project.
- 2) Publication or dissemination of any results outside the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services must be approved by Jessica Seberger, NE PRAMS Project Coordinator, Lifespan Health Services - Department of Health and Human Services or her successor in office.
- 3) Because of the way the PRAMS data are weighted, analyses must include the entire state of Nebraska. However, subpopulations may be examined in the context of analysis of the entire state by using multi-dimensional tables or multiple variable regression, if the following conditions are met:
  - a) The actual number of respondents within any stratum or subpopulation reported must be at least 30\*; and
  - b) Confidence intervals must be reported, and/or the statistical significance or lack thereof must be clearly stated in any public or private communications or published report.
- 4) PRAMS has a minimum overall response rate threshold policy for the release of data.
  - 2000-2006 – response rate threshold of 70%\*
  - 2007-2011 – response rate threshold of 65%\*
  - 2012-2014 – response rate threshold of 60%\*
  - 2015-2016 – response rate threshold of 55%\*Nebraska PRAMS stratifies by race/ethnicity (white, black/African American, American Indian, Asian or Pacific Islander and Hispanic). If any one of the stratum or subpopulation falls below the required threshold then analyses specific to that stratum will result in potentially biased estimates and should not be reported separately.

*\*Below this number, the respondents may not be representative of their supposed population, and the statistical distributions may not satisfy assumptions of the methods used*

## Overview of PRAMS

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The Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) is an ongoing, population-based surveillance system that collects information on maternal characteristics, behaviors, and experiences that occur several months prior to conception, during pregnancy, and immediately following delivery. PRAMS survey data supplement birth certificate information and provide participating project areas with information specific to their jurisdiction which can be used to

plan and evaluate maternal and child health programs and make health policy decisions. Currently 40 states and New York City participate in the PRAMS project.

## Methods

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Each month, mothers who are state residents and have recently delivered a live-born infant during the preceding 2–4 months are randomly selected from a file of birth certificate records using stratified systematic sampling. Mothers who had a multiple birth greater than three gestations are excluded from the sampling frame. Popular state stratification variables include infant birth weight, maternal race/ethnicity, and geographic location.

Sampled mothers are mailed a letter that introduces them to the project, followed by a self-administered 14 page standardized questionnaire several days later. The PRAMS questionnaire consists of core questions that are asked by all PRAMS state projects. In addition, each project inserts 10–30 questions they develop themselves or modules of questions developed by CDC standard questions. Depending upon the state, one to two additional questionnaire mailings are sent if a participant has not responded (Nebraska PRAMS sends two additional questionnaire mailings). All states conduct telephone interview follow-up for non-responding mothers. The PRAMS questionnaire has been translated into Spanish for states with sizable Spanish-speaking populations.

## Data Sets

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States collect and submit data to CDC from three different sources: the PRAMS questionnaire, the birth certificate, and survey operational data. The data are weighted annually for each state to adjust for nonresponsive, non-coverage, and sampling fractions. The annual weighted data sets contain data from all three sources. The questionnaire data contain mothers' responses to the questionnaire. The birth certificate data contain information on selected maternal characteristics (e.g. race, ethnicity, age) and pregnancy outcomes (e.g. birth weight, gestational age). The operations data are generated by the PRAMS operational software and are used primarily for operational evaluations and analyses of survey methods. In addition, a comment data set is maintained separately from the weighted project area data sets. The comment data set consists of mother's comments to the questions or their comments about answering questions related to their pregnancies (either directly written on a mailed questionnaire or spoken during a telephone interview). Analysts use the comment file to re-code maternal responses or to obtain qualitative data from written or verbatim comments.

## Summary of Variables Included in PRAMS Dataset

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**The following core variables can be provided in the analysis datasets provided to data researchers if requested.**

1) The variables id and state.

2) All core birth certificate variables except for: the birth certificate number; “day” portion of infant date of birth, mother date of birth, and date of last menses; county of residence; and hospital of birth.

3) The following operations variables:  
batch; babydead; modecont; particip; mode\_prt; urb\_rur; and hispanic.

4) All core questionnaire variables (**or you can ask just for specific variables**) except for the “day” portion of: infant date of birth; mother date of birth; today’s date; date of discharge; date of admission; due date; and date of infant death.

5) All variables computed from the birth certificate and questionnaire, except for the variables stored in SAS date format.

6) The following weighting and SUDAAN analysis variables: cell; sud\_nest; stratumc; nest\_yr; samcnt; totcnt; wtone; wttwo; wtthree; and wtanal.

## Analysis Software

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Due to the complex survey design used by PRAMS, CDC recommends that analysts use SUDAAN (Survey Data Analysis, Research Triangle Institute, NC) software or another software product that allows for complex sampling designs, to compute variance estimates and perform significance testing. Nevertheless, standard software products can be used to compute point estimates because analysis weights can be incorporated into statistical procedures. When conducting operational analyses that do not involve weighted data, standard statistical software packages can be used.

## Approval to Analyze PRAMS Data

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To facilitate the process of obtaining Nebraska PRAMS data, researchers may submit an application form and abstract to Nebraska PRAMS at [jessica.seberger@nebraska.gov](mailto:jessica.seberger@nebraska.gov). There should be one application for each proposed project. Details concerning content of the application and abstract are found below.

## Authorship

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PRAMS is a collaborative effort among state health departments and CDC’s Division of Reproductive Health, an acknowledgement of Nebraska PRAMS and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) PRAMS Team, Applied Sciences Branch, Division of Reproductive Health needs to be included.

## Submission Steps

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- Send research proposals electronically to [jessica.seberger@nebraska.gov](mailto:jessica.seberger@nebraska.gov)

- Proposals will be reviewed regarding the suitability of PRAMS data for the proposed analysis and the appropriateness of the analysis plan considering the PRAMS survey design.
- All researchers who are listed on the proposal will sign a Data Sharing agreement and submit the form to the above e-mail with the proposal via scanned electronic copy. Approval to analyze PRAMS data applies only to the topic described in the research proposal. If a researcher desires to conduct additional analyses, a separate application is required.
- Nebraska PRAMS will respond to the primary researcher within two weeks. This response may include a summary of comments/questions Nebraska PRAMS may have and notification of an approval/disapproval to conduct the analysis.
- Nebraska PRAMS will create a standard SAS analysis data set on a CD-ROM or a diskette(s) for the primary researcher.
- Once the analysis described in the research proposal has been completed, researchers are to destroy their copy of the data (confirm in writing) or return the data to Nebraska PRAMS.

## Publication or Presentation

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Before submitting an abstract using PRAMS data, researchers must submit their abstract to Nebraska PRAMS for comment at least **two weeks prior** to the submission. A courtesy copy of slides for oral presentations is also requested prior to presentation.

As a condition of the data sharing agreement that researchers sign to obtain the PRAMS data, researchers are also required to send a copy of any manuscripts that use PRAMS data to Nebraska PRAMS at least two weeks prior to submitting the manuscript to a peer-reviewed journal.