

# **ANNUAL SYNAR REPORT**

**42 U.S.C. 300x-26**

OMB № 0930-0222

**FFY 2025**

**State: PR**

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OMB No. 0930-0222  
Expiration Date: 06/30/XXXX

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## INTRODUCTION

The Annual Synar Report (ASR) format provides the means for states to comply with the reporting provisions of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300x-26) and the Tobacco Regulation for the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant (SABG) (45 C.F.R. 96.130 (e)).

### How the Synar report helps the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention

In accordance with the tobacco regulations, states are required to provide detailed information on progress made in enforcing youth and young adult tobacco access laws (FFY 2024 Compliance Progress) and future plans to ensure compliance with the Synar requirements to reduce youth and young adult tobacco access rates (FFY 2025 Intended Use Plan). These data are required by 42 U.S.C. 300x-26 and will be used by the Secretary to evaluate state compliance with the statute. Part of the mission of the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) is to assist states<sup>1</sup> by supporting Synar activities and providing technical assistance helpful in determining the type of enforcement measures and control strategies that are most effective. This information is helpful to CSAP in improving technical assistance resources and expertise on enforcement efforts and tobacco control program support activities, including state Synar program support services, through an enhanced technical assistance program involving conferences and workshops, development of training materials and guidance documents, and onsite technical assistance consultation.

### How the Synar report can help states

The information gathered for the Synar report can help states describe and analyze substate needs for program enhancements. These data can also be used to report to the state legislature and other state and local organizations on progress made to date in enforcing youth and young adult tobacco access laws when aggregated statistical data from state Synar reports can demonstrate to the Secretary the national progress in reducing youth and young adult tobacco access problems. This information will also provide Congress with a better understanding of state progress in implementing Synar, including state difficulties and successes in enforcing retailer compliance

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<sup>1</sup>The term "state" is used to refer to all the states and territories required to comply with Synar as part of the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant Program requirements (42 U.S.C. 300x-64 and 45 C.F.R. 96.121).

with youth and young adult tobacco access laws.

### **Getting assistance in completing the Synar report**

If you have questions about programmatic issues, you may call CSAP's Division of Primary Prevention at (240) 276-2550 and ask for your respective State Project Officer, or contact your State Project Officer directly by telephone or email. If you have questions about fiscal or grants management issues, you may call your Grants Management Specialist in the Office of Financial Resources, Division of Grants Management, at (240) 276-1422.

### **Where and when to submit the Synar report**

The ASR must be received by SAMHSA no later than December 31, 2024 and must be submitted in the format specified by these instructions. Use of the approved format will avoid delays in the review and approval process. The chief executive officer (or an authorized designee) of the applicant organization must sign page one of the ASR certifying that the state has complied with all reporting requirements.


The state must upload one copy of the ASR using the online WebBGAS (Block Grant Application System). In addition, the following items must be uploaded to WebBGAS:

- FFY 2025 Synar Survey Results: States that use the Synar Survey Estimation System (SSES) must upload one copy of *SSES Tables 1-8* (in Excel) to WebBGAS. **Please note that, in the FFY 2025 ASR, SSES will generate Tables 6, 7, and 8, which are based on the optional microdata on product type, retail outlet type, and whether identification was requested. If your state does not submit these optional data, Tables 6, 7, and 8 will be blank. Tables 6, 7, and 8 are generated for the convenience of the state, and states are not required to submit completed versions of Tables 6, 7, or 8. States that do not use SSES must upload one copy of ASR Forms 1, 4, and 5, and Forms 2 and 3, if applicable, (in Excel), as well as a database with the raw inspection data to WebBGAS.**
- Synar Inspection Form: States must upload one blank copy of the inspection form used to record the result of each Synar inspection.
- Synar Inspection Protocol: States must upload a copy of the protocol used to train inspection teams on conducting and reporting the results of the Synar inspections. This document should be different than the Appendix C attached to the Annual Synar Report.
- A scanned copy of the signed Funding Agreements/Certifications

Each state SSA Director has been emailed a login ID and password to log onto the Synar section of the WebBGAS site.

**FFY 2025: FUNDING AGREEMENTS/CERTIFICATIONS**

The following form must be signed by the Chief Executive Officer or an authorized designee and submitted with this application. Documentation authorizing a designee must be attached to the application.

<b>PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES ACT AND SYNAR AMENDMENT</b>	
42 U.S.C. 300x-26 requires each state to submit an annual report of its progress in meeting the requirements of the Synar Amendment and its implementing regulation (45 C.F.R. 96.130) to the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. By signing below, the chief executive officer (or an authorized designee) of the applicant organization certifies that the state has complied with these reporting requirements and the certifications as set forth below.	
<b>SYNAR SURVEY SAMPLING METHODOLOGY</b>	
The state certifies that the Synar survey sampling methodology on file with the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention and submitted with the Annual Synar Report for FFY 2025 is up-to-date and approved by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention.	
<b>SYNAR SURVEY INSPECTION PROTOCOL</b>	
The state certifies that the Synar Survey Inspection Protocol on file with the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention and submitted with the Annual Synar Report for FFY 2025 is up-to-date and approved by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention.	
State: PR	
Name of Chief Executive Officer or Designee: Leda. Carmen Bonet Vázquez	
Signature of CEO or Designee:	
Title: Administrator	Date Signed: 12/12/2024
If signed by a designee, a copy of the designation must be attached.	

**SECTION I: FFY 2024 (Compliance Progress)**

**YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT ACCESS LAWS, ACTIVITIES, AND ENFORCEMENT**

42 U.S.C. 300x-26 requires the states to report information regarding the sale/distribution of tobacco products to individuals under age 21.

**1. Please indicate any changes or additions to the state tobacco statute(s) relating to youth and young adult access since the last reporting year. If any changes were made to the state law(s) since the last reporting year, please upload a copy of the state law to WebBGAS. (see 42 U.S.C. 300x-26).**

**a. Has there been a change in the minimum sale age for tobacco products?**

Yes  No

*If Yes, current minimum age:*  19  20  21

**b. Have there been any changes in state law that impact the state’s protocol for conducting Synar inspections?**

Yes  No

*If Yes, indicate change. (Check all that apply.)*

- Changed to require that law enforcement conduct inspections of tobacco outlets
- Changed to make it illegal for youth and young adults to possess, purchase or receive tobacco
- Changed to require ID to purchase tobacco
- Changed definition of tobacco products
- Other change(s) *(Please describe.)* \_\_\_\_\_

**c. Have there been any changes in state law that impact the following?**

Licensing of tobacco vendors  Yes  No

Penalties for sales to minors  Yes  No

Vending machines  Yes  No

Added product categories to youth and young adult access law  Yes  No

**2. Describe how the Annual Synar Report (see 45 C.F.R. 96.130(e)) was made public within the state prior to submission of the ASR. (Check all that apply.)**

Placed on file for public review

Posted on a state agency Web site *(Please provide exact Web address and the date when the FFY 2025 ASR was posted to this Web address.)*

Web address: *assmca.pr.gov*

Date published: *20/12/24*

Notice published in a newspaper or newsletter

- Public hearing
- Announced in a news release, a press conference, or discussed in a media interview
- Distributed for review as part of the SABG application process
- Distributed through the public library system
- Published in an annual register
- Other *(Please describe.)* \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Identify the following agency or agencies** *(see 42 U.S.C. 300x-26 and 45 C.F.R. 96.130).*

- a. The state agency(ies) designated by the Governor for oversight of the Synar requirements:**

*Mental Health and Anti-Addiction Services Administration*

Has this changed since last year's Annual Synar Report?

- Yes  No

- b. The state agency(ies) responsible for conducting random, unannounced Synar inspections:**

*Mental Health and Anti-Addiction Services Administration*

Has this changed since last year's Annual Synar Report?

- Yes  No

- c. The state agency(ies) responsible for enforcing youth and young adult tobacco access law(s):**

*Puerto Rico Treasury Department, Puerto Rico Police, and Consumers Affairs Department*

Has this changed since last year's Annual Synar Report?

- Yes  No

**4. Identify the following agencies and describe their relationship with the agency responsible for the oversight of the Synar requirements.**

- a. Identify the state agency responsible for tobacco prevention activities (the agency that receives the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Tobacco Control Program funding).**

*Puerto Rico Health Department*

- b. Has the responsible agency changed since last year's Annual Synar Report?**

- Yes  No

- c. Describe the coordination and collaboration that occur between the agency responsible for tobacco prevention and the agency responsible for oversight of the Synar requirements. (Check all that apply.) The two agencies**

- Are the same
- Have a formal written memorandum of agreement
- Have an informal partnership
- Conduct joint planning activities
- Combine resources
- Have other collaborative arrangement(s) *(Please describe.)* The Department of Health is part of the Tobacco Prevention Advisory Committee lead by MHAASA
- No relationship

**d. Does a state agency contract with the Food and Drug Administration’s Center for Tobacco Products (FDA/CTP) to enforce the youth and young adult access and advertising restrictions in the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act?**

- Yes  No (if no, go to Question 5)

**e. If yes, identify the state agency responsible for enforcing the youth and young adult access and advertising restrictions in the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act (the agency that is under contract to the Food and Drug Administration’s Center for Tobacco Products (FDA/CTP)).**

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**f. Has the responsible agency changed since last year’s Annual Synar Report?**

- Yes  No

**g. Describe the coordination and collaboration that occur between the agency contracted with the FDA to enforce federal youth and young adult tobacco access laws and the agency responsible for oversight of the Synar requirements. (Check all that apply.) The two agencies:**

- Are the same
- Have a formal written memorandum of agreement
- Have an informal partnership
- Conduct joint planning activities
- Combine resources
- Have other collaborative arrangement(s) *(Please describe.)* \_\_\_\_\_
- No relationship

**h. Does the state use data from the FDA enforcement inspections for Synar survey reporting?**

- Yes  No



5. Please answer the following questions regarding the state’s activities to enforce the state’s youth and young adult access to tobacco law(s) in FFY 2024 (see 42 U.S.C. 300x-26 and 45 C.F.R. 96.130(e)).

a. Which one of the following describes the enforcement of state youth and young adult access to tobacco laws carried out in your state? (Check one category only.)

- Enforcement is conducted exclusively by local law enforcement agencies.
- Enforcement is conducted exclusively by state agency(ies).
- Enforcement is conducted by both local *and* state agencies.

b. The following items concern penalties imposed for all violations of state youth and young adult access to tobacco laws by LOCAL AND/OR STATE LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES (this does not include enforcement of local laws or federal youth and young adult tobacco access laws). Please fill in the number requested. If state law does not allow for an item, please mark “NA” (not applicable). If a response for an item is unknown, please mark “UNK.” The chart must be filled in completely.

PENALTY	OWNERS	CLERKS	TOTAL
Number of <u>citations issued</u>	0	0	0
Number of <u>finest assessed</u>	0	0	0
Number of <u>permits/licenses suspended</u>	0		0
Number of <u>permits/licenses revoked</u>	0		0
Other (Please describe.) <i>There were warnings issued to those outlets found in violation during the Synar Study. Also, the clerks were oriented about the law by the MHAASA and the Puerto Rico Treasury Department.</i>	40	0	40

c. Are citations or warnings issued to retailers or clerks who sell tobacco to minors for inspections that are part of the Synar survey?

- Yes     No

If “Yes” to 5c, please describe the state’s procedure for minimizing risk of bias to the survey results from retailers alerting each other to the presence of the survey teams:

To minimize the risk of bias, the team split into groups and conducted simultaneous inspections. Throughout the inspection period, team members maintained communication. If one team issues a citation, all other teams are immediately notified. When the youth inspectors entered an outlet, they had to leave if they had prior knowledge about the inspection and postpone the inspection for a later date that was unannounced.

**d. Which one of the following best describes the level of enforcement of state youth and young adult access to tobacco laws carried out in your state? (Check one category only.)**

- Enforcement is conducted only at those outlets randomly selected for the Synar survey.
- Enforcement is conducted only at a subset of outlets not randomly selected for the Synar survey.
- Enforcement is conducted at a combination of outlets randomly selected for the Synar survey and outlets not randomly selected for the Synar survey.

**e. Did every tobacco outlet in the state receive at least one compliance check that included enforcement of the state youth and young adult tobacco access law(s) in the last year?**

- Yes  No

**f. What additional activities are conducted in your state to support enforcement and compliance with state youth and young adult tobacco access law(s)? (Check all that apply and briefly describe each activity in the text boxes below each activity.)**

- Merchant education and/or training

MHAASA's Regional Prevention Staff conducted visits to 4,337 outlets and licensed retailers to provide orientation on legislation prohibiting the sale, donation, and distribution of tobacco products, including cigarettes and e-cigarettes, to individuals under 21 years of age (Law 45-2021, Law 45-2015). Retailers were educated on the importance of requesting IDs from anyone appearing under 27 and informed of the legal implications of non-compliance.

**Posters and Stickers Distributed:** A total of **3,335 retailers** received updated posters and stickers highlighting current legislation. Establishments with multiple cashier stations, such as supermarkets and gas stations, were given additional materials.

**Proximity Restrictions Reminders:** Retailers were reminded to comply with **Law 62-1993**, which prohibits the advertisement and promotion of tobacco products within 500 feet of schools and daycare facilities.

- Incentives for merchants who are in compliance (e.g., nonenforcement compliance checks in which compliant retailers are given positive reinforcement and noncompliant retailers are warned about youth and young adult access laws)

- Community education regarding youth and young adult access laws

**Radio Programs:**

The MHAASA Assistant Administrator for Prevention participated in **seven radio programs** to discuss the results of the *Consulta Juvenil XI Study* (2020–2022) and highlight the increase in vaping among adolescents.

**Key Findings:**

**17.5%** of students reported using e-cigarettes at least once, representing approximately **32,352 adolescents**.

**5.3%** of students reported lifetime use of tobacco products, estimating **9,898 students**.

**Radio Stations:**

WKAQ 580 AM (Rubén Sánchez Program)

Radio Isla 1320 AM (Luis Penchi Program)

Radio Isla (Millie Méndez – *Ahí está la Verdad*)

Radio Victoria 840 FM

Magic 97.3 FM

Dimensión 103

FM Radio Vida 90.5 FM

**TV Programs:**

Channel 11 (*Pelota Dura*).

**Newspaper Interviews:** Articles were published in *Metro*, *El Vocero*, and *Periódico La Semana*, raising awareness about the prevalence of e-cigarette use among youth and detailing MHAASA's prevention efforts.

**Alternative Strategies:**

**Theater Collaboration:** MHAASA collaborated with *Alfonsina Inc.* to present the play *Somos Familia* (“We Are Family”), focusing on family unity and substance-free living. The program reached **2,153 participants** in schools and communities.

**Summer Events – KQ Games:** With KQ 105 radio, MHAASA hosted family-friendly, drug-free events at public beaches (Guánica, Cabo Rojo, Carolina, Vega Baja). Activities included interactive stations featuring fatal vision goggles simulating alcohol and marijuana impairment. **Youth and families** participated in skill-building games, promoting substance-free recreation.

**School and Workshop Initiatives:**

**Private Schools:** MHAASA staff conducted orientations on tobacco, vaping, alcohol, and drug prevention for **2,148 participants** across **11 private schools**.

**Public Schools:** Under a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Education, staff provided workshops on:

**E-cigarettes and vaping: 27,860 participants.**

**Tobacco harms: 4,517 participants.**

**Elementary Schools:** Staff conducted **467 creative tobacco workshops**, reaching **7,226 students**.

**“Turn Off Vape” Project:** Utilizing funds from the JUUL lawsuit, MHAASA delivered **2,627 workshops** to **70,816 participants**, emphasizing the dangers of vaping.

**National and Local Engagement:**

**SAMHSA Visit:** On May 6, 2024, representatives from SAMHSA met with MHAASA to discuss the *Consulta Juvenil XI Study* results and address vaping issues among students.

**Prevention Summit:** During the April 2024 Summit, the Assistant Administrator highlighted the study findings and vaping concerns while promoting community coalitions.

**Drug-Free Workplace Training:** A training session at the Cataño Convention Center addressed protective and risk factors associated with substance abuse, with a focus on vaping.

**Tobacco Control Program:** MHAASA staff participated in an orientation under the Department of Health’s *“No Solo Es Vapor”* initiative, furthering education on vaping-related risks.

MHAASA remains committed to reducing substance use among Puerto Rican youth and fostering healthier communities through robust prevention, education, and outreach initiatives.

Media use to publicize compliance inspection results

Community mobilization to increase support for retailer compliance with youth and young adult access laws

Other activities *(Please list.)* \_\_\_\_\_

## SYNAR SURVEY METHODS AND RESULTS

The following questions pertain to the survey methodology and results of the Synar survey used by the state to meet the requirements of the Synar Regulation in FFY 2024 (see 42 U.S.C. 300x-26 and 45 C.F.R. 96.130).

**6. Has the sampling methodology changed from the previous year?**

Yes  No

*The state is required to have an approved up-to-date description of the Synar sampling methodology on file with CSAP. Please submit a copy of your Synar Survey Sampling Methodology (Appendix B). If the sampling methodology changed from the previous reporting year, these changes must be reflected in the methodology submitted.*

**a. If yes, describe how and when this change was communicated to SAMHSA**

**7. Please answer the following questions regarding the state’s annual random, unannounced inspections of tobacco outlets (see 45 C.F.R. 96.130(d)(2)).**

**a. Did the state use the optional Synar Survey Estimation System (SSES) to analyze the Synar survey data?**

Yes  No

*If Yes, upload a copy of SSES tables 1–8 (in Excel) to WebBGAS. Then go to Question 8. If No, continue to Question 7b.*

**b. Report the weighted and unweighted Retailer Violation Rate (RVR) estimates, the standard error, accuracy rate (number of eligible outlets divided by the total number of sampled outlets), and completion rate (number of eligible outlets inspected divided by the total number of eligible outlets).**

**Unweighted RVR** \_\_\_\_\_

**Weighted RVR** \_\_\_\_\_

**Standard error (s.e.) of the (weighted) RVR** \_\_\_\_\_

**Fill in the blanks to calculate the right limit of the right-sided 95% confidence interval.**

$$\text{RVR Estimate} + (1.645 \times \text{Standard Error}) = \text{Right Limit}$$

plus            times

**Accuracy rate** \_\_\_\_\_

**Completion rate** \_\_\_\_\_

c. **Fill out Form 1 in Appendix A (Forms 1–5).** *(Required regardless of the sample design.)*

d. **How were the (weighted) RVR estimate and its standard error obtained?**  
*(Check the one that applies.)*

- Form 2 (Optional) in Appendix A (Forms 1–5) *(Attach completed Form 2.)*  
 Other *(Please specify. Provide formulas and calculations or attach and explain the program code and output with description of all variable names.)*

e. **If stratification was used, did any strata in the sample contain only one outlet or cluster this year?**

- Yes  No  No stratification

*If Yes, explain how this situation was dealt with in variance estimation.*

f. **Was a cluster sample design used?**

- Yes  No

*If Yes, fill out and attach Form 3 in Appendix A (Forms 1–5), and answer the following question.*

*If No, go to Question 7g.*

**Were any certainty primary sampling units selected this year?**

- Yes  No

*If Yes, explain how the certainty clusters were dealt with in variance estimation.*

g. **Report the following outlet sample sizes for the Synar survey.**

	Sample Size
<b>Effective sample size</b> (sample size needed to meet the SAMHSA precision requirement assuming simple random sampling)	
<b>Target sample size</b> (the product of the effective sample size and the design effect)	
<b>Original sample size</b> (inflated sample size of the target sample to counter the sample attrition due to ineligibility and noncompletion)	
<b>Eligible sample size</b> (number of outlets found to be eligible in the sample)	
<b>Final sample size</b> (number of eligible outlets in the sample for which an inspection was completed)	

h. **Fill out Form 4 in Appendix A (Forms 1–5).**

**8. Did the state's Synar survey use a list frame?**

Yes  No

*If Yes, answer the following questions about its coverage.*

**a. The calendar year of the latest Sampling frame coverage study: 2021**

**b. Percent coverage from the latest Sampling frame coverage study: 89.4%**

**c. Was a new study conducted in this reporting period?**

Yes  No

*If Yes, please complete Appendix D (List Sampling Frame Coverage Study) and submit it with the Annual Synar Report.*

**d. The calendar year of the next coverage study planned: 2025**

**9. Has the Synar survey inspection protocol changed from the previous year?**

Yes  No

*The state is required to have an approved up-to-date description of the Synar inspection protocol on file with CSAP. Please submit a copy of your Synar Survey Inspection Protocol (Appendix C). If the inspection protocol changed from the previous year, these changes must be reflected in the protocol submitted.*

**a. If Yes, describe how and when this change was communicated to SAMHSA**

**b. Provide the inspection period: From 9/9/2024 to 12/2/2024**  
MM/DD/YY MM/DD/YY

**c. Provide the number of youth and young adult inspectors used in the current inspection year:**

12

NOTE: If the state uses SSES, please ensure that the number reported in 9b matches that reported in SSES Table 4, or explain any difference.

**d. Fill out and attach Form 5 in Appendix A (Forms 1–5). (Not required if the state used SSES to analyze the Synar survey data.)**

## SECTION II: FFY 2025 (Intended Use):

Public Law 42 U.S.C. 300x-26 of the Public Health Service Act and 45 C.F.R. 96.130 (e) (4, 5) require that the states provide information on future plans to ensure compliance with the Synar requirements to reduce youth and young adult tobacco access.

### 1. In the upcoming year, does the state anticipate any changes in:

Synar sampling methodology  Yes  No

Synar inspection protocol  Yes  No

*If changes are made in either the Synar sampling methodology or the Synar inspection protocol, the state is required to obtain approval from CSAP prior to implementation of the change and file an updated Synar Survey Sampling Methodology (Appendix B) or an updated Synar Survey Inspection Protocol (Appendix C), as appropriate.*

### 2. Please describe the state's plans to maintain and/or reduce the target rate for Synar inspections to be completed in FFY 2025. Include a brief description of plans for law enforcement efforts to enforce youth and young adult tobacco access laws, activities that support law enforcement efforts to enforce youth and young adult tobacco access laws, and any anticipated changes in youth and young adult tobacco access legislation or regulation in the state.

MHAASA will continue to maintain the Tobacco Prevention Advisor Committee (CAPT). This year, the CAPT met twice from June to December 2024. This year, the committee updated the work plan (objectives and strategies) and discussed tobacco-related bills. MHAASA will develop an educational campaign for establishment owners, especially supermarkets and gas stations. MHAASA will support public policy efforts to reduce the accessibility of e-cigarettes and vapers.

In addition, we established conversations with one of the members of the new senate elected as of January 1, 2025, in relation to creating legislation that could generate fines for those merchants who violate the law and sell tobacco products to minors under 21 or who do not request identification from any person who appears to be 30 years of age or younger.

### 3. Describe any challenges the state faces in complying with the Synar regulation. (Check all that apply and describe each challenge in the text box below it.)

Limited resources for law enforcement of youth and young adult access laws

The enforcement agencies continue to need more inspection agents due to the retirement of many of their staff members. The economic situation of government agencies limits the recruitment of new Internal Revenue Agents.

Limited resources for activities to support enforcement and compliance with youth and young adult tobacco access laws

The economic crisis of the island limits the resources available for enforcement activities.

Limitations in the state youth and young adult tobacco access laws



[Empty box]

- Limited public support for enforcement of youth and young adult tobacco access laws

[Empty box]

- Limitations on completeness/accuracy of list of tobacco outlets

The Synar Study in Puerto Rico utilizes the list of tobacco-licensed retailers maintained by the Puerto Rico Office of Management and Budget (OMB), which has demonstrated high accuracy and comprehensiveness in prior Coverage Studies. Data migration from the Treasury Department, the previous managing agency, to the OMB was recently concluded. This transition encountered several challenges, including inaccuracies in license number IDs, expired licenses, and duplicate retailer listings. The OMB list was supplemented with information gathered from MHAASA's annual orientations for tobacco retailers and commercial businesses to mitigate these issues. Additionally, the study was conducted from September to December instead of the originally planned July to September due to challenges in recruiting young inspectors and delays in the contractual process. During this period, all youth inspectors began their college studies, and inspections were conducted during their available times. As a result, some stores may have been closed, temporarily unavailable, or operating on altered schedules. In future studies, we intend to begin recruitment and contracting earlier. We will make efforts to verify store hours and accessibility in advance to minimize the impact of time-related constraints.

- Limited expertise in survey methodology

[Empty box]

- Laws/regulations limiting the use of minors in tobacco inspections

[Empty box]

- Difficulties recruiting youth and young adult inspectors

MHAASA has a great challenge for next year when recruiting youngsters from 18 to 20 years of age for the Synar Study must comply with the requirements of the General Services Administration (ASG by its Spanish acronym). ASG requests that any person who wants to work by contract as a professional services provider with the Government of Puerto Rico must apply for a Certification of the Single Registry of Professional Services Providers (RUP). To obtain the RUP, the youngster must request thirteen documents and an Annual Fee of \$100.00. They must pay for an affidavit and other documents from \$25.00 to \$50.00. This year, MHAASA requested an exemption for the youngsters but received a communication from ASG that the youngsters will have to comply with the RUP for next year. Most of all, the youngsters don't have savings or a credit card to comply with the Annual Fee of \$100.00. MHAASA will ask for an exemption again, but if the exemption is denied, we will have difficulties recruiting youngsters.

- Issues regarding the balance of inspections conducted by youth inspectors age 15 and under

The recruitment process of youth inspectors was a challenge. Some candidates refused to participate. There were nine females and three males.

- Issues regarding the balance of inspections conducted by one gender of youth and young adult inspectors

- Geographic, demographic, and logistical considerations in conducting inspections

- Cultural factors (e.g., language barriers, young people purchasing for their elders)

- Issues regarding sources of tobacco under tribal jurisdiction

- Other challenges (*Please list.*) Safety concerns

Safety concerns exist for staff and youth when the outlets are in high-risk crime areas and are open for business after 8:00 p.m. Instability in Puerto Rico (i.e., fiscal crisis, unemployment) continues to influence tobacco sales. Businesses feel the economy's effects; therefore, they are more willing to sell to minors to increase profit margins. MHAASA plans to continue its efforts and keep awareness of this issue at the forefront with law enforcement, retailers, and the general community

## APPENDIX A: FORMS 1–5

### FORM 1 (Required for all states not using the Synar Survey Estimation System (SSES) to analyze the Synar Survey data)

Complete Form 1 to report sampling frame and sample information and to calculate the unweighted retailer violation rate (RVR) using results from the current year’s Synar survey inspections.

**Instructions for Completing Form 1:** In the top right-hand corner of the form, provide the state name and reporting federal fiscal year (FFY 2025). Provide the remaining information by stratum if stratification was used. Make copies of the form if additional rows are needed to list all the strata.

Column 1: *If stratification was used:*

1(a) Sequentially number each row.

1(b) Write in the name of each stratum. All strata in the state must be listed.

*If no stratification was used:*

1(a) Leave blank.

1(b) Write “state” in the first row (indicates that the whole state is a single stratum).

*Note for unstratified samples: For Columns 2–5, wherever the instruction refers to “each stratum,” report the specified information for the state as a whole.*

Column 2: 2(a) Report the number of over-the-counter (OTC) outlets in the sampling frame in each stratum.

2(b) Report the number of vending machine (VM) outlets in the sampling frame in each stratum.

2(c) Report the combined total of OTC and VM outlets in the sampling frame in each stratum.

Column 3: 3(a) Report the estimated number of eligible OTC outlets in the OTC outlet population in each stratum.

3(b) Report the estimated number of eligible VM outlets in the VM outlet population in each stratum.

3(c) Report the combined total estimated number of eligible OTC and VM outlets in the total outlet population in each stratum.

*The estimates for Column 3 can be obtained from the Synar survey sample as the weighted sum of eligible outlets by outlet type.*

Column 4: 4(a) Report the number of eligible OTC outlets for which an inspection was completed, for each stratum.

4(b) Report the numbers of eligible VM outlets for which an inspection was completed, for each stratum.

4(c) Report the combined total of eligible OTC and VM outlets for which an inspection was completed, for each stratum.

Column 5: 5(a) Report the number of OTC outlets found in violation of the law as a result of completed inspections, for each stratum.

5(b) Report the number of VM outlets found in violation of the law as a result of completed inspections, for each stratum.

5(c) Report the combined total of OTC and VM outlets found in violation of the law as a result of completed inspections, for each stratum.

Totals: For each subcolumn (a–c) in Columns 2–5, provide totals for the state as a whole in the last row of the table. These numbers will be the sum of the numbers in each row for the respective column.



## **FORM 2 (Optional)**

### **Appropriate for stratified simple or systematic random sampling designs.**

Complete Form 2 to calculate the weighted RVR. This table (in Excel form) is designed to calculate the weighted RVR for stratified simple or systematic random sampling designs, accounting for ineligible outlets and noncomplete inspections encountered during the annual Synar survey.

**Instructions for Completing Form 2:** In the top right-hand corner of the form, provide the state name and reporting federal fiscal year (FFY 2025).

- Column 1: Write in the name of each stratum into which the sample was divided. These should match the strata reported in Column 1(b) of Form 1.
- Column 2: Report the number of outlets in the sampling frame in each stratum. These numbers should match the numbers reported for the respective strata in Column 2(c) of Form 1.
- Column 3: Report the original sample size (the number of outlets originally selected, *including* substitutes or replacements) for each stratum.
- Column 4: Report the number of sample outlets in each stratum that were found to be eligible during the inspections. Note that this number must be less than or equal to the number reported in Column 3 for the respective strata.
- Column 5: Report the number of eligible outlets in each stratum for which an inspection was completed. Note that this number must be less than or equal to the number reported in Column 4. These numbers should match the numbers reported in Column 4(c) of Form 1 for the respective strata.
- Column 6: Report the number of eligible outlets inspected in each stratum that were found in violation. These numbers should match the numbers reported in Column 5(c) of Form 1 for the stratum.
- Column 7: Form 2 (in Excel form) will automatically calculate the stratum RVR for each stratum in this column. This is calculated by dividing the number of inspected eligible outlets found in violation (Column 6) by the number of inspected eligible outlets (Column 5). The state unweighted RVR will be shown in the Total row of Column 7.
- Column 8: Form 2 (in Excel form) will automatically calculate the estimated number of eligible outlets in the population for each stratum. This calculation is made by multiplying the number of outlets in the sampling frame (Column 2) times the number of eligible outlets (Column 4) divided by the original sample size (Column 3). Note that these numbers will be less than or equal to the numbers in Column 2.
- Column 9: Form 2 (in Excel form) will automatically calculate the relative stratum weight by dividing the estimated number of eligible outlets in the population for each stratum in Column 8 by the Total of the values in Column 8.
- Column 10: Form 2 (in Excel form) will automatically calculate each stratum's contribution to the state weighted RVR by multiplying the stratum RVR (Column 7) by the relative stratum weight (Column 9). The weighted RVR for the state will be shown in the Total row of Column 10.
- Column 11: Form 2 (in Excel form) automatically calculates the standard error of each stratum's RVR (Column 7). The standard error for the state weighted RVR will be shown in the Total row of Column 11.
- TOTAL: For Columns 2–6, Form 2 (in Excel form) provides totals for the state as a whole in the last row of the table. For Columns 7–11, it calculates the respective statistic for the state as a whole.

**FORM 2 (Optional) Appropriate for stratified simple or systematic random sampling designs.**

Calculation of Weighted Retailer Violation Rate										
										State: _____
										FFY: 2025
(1) Stratum Name	(2) N Number of Outlets in Sampling Frame	(3) n Original Sample Size	(4) n1 Number of Sample Outlets Found Eligible	(5) n2 Number of Outlets Inspected	(6) x Number of Outlets Found in Violation	(7) p=x/n2 Stratum Retailer Violation Rate	(8) N'=N(n1/n) Estimated Number of Eligible Outlets in Population	(9) w=N'/Total Column 8 Relative Stratum Weight	(10) pw Stratum Contribution to State Weighted RVR	(11) s.e. Standard Error of Stratum RVR
<b>Total</b>										

- N - number of outlets in sampling frame
- n - original sample size (number of outlets in the original sample)
- n1 - number of sample outlets that were found to be eligible
- n2 - number of eligible outlets that were inspected
- x - number of inspected outlets that were found in violation
- p - stratum retailer violation rate (p=x/n2)
- N' - estimated number of eligible outlets in population (N'=N\*n1/n)
- w - relative stratum weight (w=N'/Total Column 8)
- pw - stratum contribution to the weighted RVR
- s.e. - standard error of the stratum RVR

**FORM 3 (Required when a cluster design is used for all states not using the Synar Survey Estimation System [SSES] to analyze the Synar survey data.)**

Complete Form 3 to report information about primary sampling units when a cluster design was used for the Synar survey.

**Instructions for Completing Form 3:** In the top right-hand corner of the form, provide the state name and reporting federal fiscal year (FFY 2025).

Provide information by stratum if stratification was used. Make copies of the form if additional rows are needed to list all the strata.

- Column 1:       Sequentially number each row.
- Column 2:       *If stratification was used:* Write in the name of stratum. All strata in the state must be listed.  
  
*If no stratification was used:* Write “state” in the first row to indicate that the whole state constitutes a single stratum.
- Column 3:       Report the number of primary sampling units (PSUs) (i.e., first-stage clusters) created for each stratum.
- Column 4:       Report the number of PSUs selected in the original sample for each stratum.
- Column 5:       Report the number of PSUs in the final sample for each stratum.
- TOTALS:        For Columns 3–5, provide totals for the state as a whole in the last row of the table.

<b>Summary of Clusters Created and Sampled</b>				
<b>State:</b> _____				
<b>FFY:</b> 2025 _____				
(1) Row #	(2) Stratum Name	(3) Number of PSUs Created	(4) Number of PSUs Selected	(5) Number of PSUs in the Final Sample
<b>Total</b>				

**FORM 4 (Required for all states not using the Synar Survey Estimation System [SSES] to analyze the Synar Survey data)**

Complete Form 4 to provide detailed tallies of ineligible sample outlets by reasons for ineligibility and detailed tallies of eligible sample outlets with noncomplete inspections by reasons for noncompletion.

**Instructions for Completing Form 4:** In the top right-hand corner of the form, provide the state name and reporting federal fiscal year (FFY 2025).

Column 1(a): Enter the number of sample outlets found ineligible for inspection by reason for ineligibility. Provide the total number of ineligible outlets in the row marked “Total.”

Column 2(a): Enter the number of eligible sample outlets with noncomplete inspections by reason for noncompletion. Provide the total number of eligible outlets with noncomplete inspections in the row marked “Total.”

<b>Inspection Tallies by Reason of Ineligibility or Noncompletion</b>			
		State: _____	
		FFY: 2025	
(1) INELIGIBLE		(2) ELIGIBLE	
Reason for Ineligibility	(a) Counts	Reason for Noncompletion	(a) Counts
Out of business		In operation but closed at time of visit	
Does not sell tobacco products		Unsafe to access	
Inaccessible by youth or young adult		Presence of police	
Private club or private residence		Youth or young adult inspector knows salesperson	
Temporary closure		Moved to new location	
Unlocatable		Drive-thru only/youth or young adult inspector has no driver’s license	
Wholesale only/Carton sale only		Tobacco out of stock	
Vending machine broken		Ran out of time	
Duplicate		Other noncompletion reason(s) <i>(Describe.)</i>	
Other ineligibility reason(s) <i>(Describe.)</i>			
<b>Total</b>		<b>Total</b>	



**FORM 5 (Required for all states not using the Synar Survey Estimation System [SSES] to analyze the Synar survey data)**

Complete Form 5 to show the distribution of outlet inspection results by age and gender of the youth and young adult inspectors.

**Instructions for Completing Form 5:** In the top right-hand corner of the form, provide the state name and reporting federal fiscal year (FFY 2025).

Column 1: Enter the number of attempted buys by youth and young adult inspector age and gender.

Column 2: Enter the number of successful buys by youth and young adult inspector age and gender.

If the inspectors are age eligible but the gender of the inspector is unknown, include those inspections in the “Other” row. Calculate subtotals for males and females in rows marked “Male Subtotal” and “Female Subtotal.” Sum subtotals for Male, Female, and Other and record in the bottom row marked “Total.” Verify that that the total of attempted buys and successful buys equals the total for Column 4(c) and Column 5(c), respectively, on Form 1. If the totals do not match, please explain any discrepancies.

<b>Synar Survey Inspector Characteristics</b>		
		State: _____
		FFY: 2025
	(1) Attempted Buys	(2) Successful Buys
<b>Male</b>		
15 years		
16 years		
17 years		
18 years		
19 years		
20 years		
<b>Male Subtotal</b>		
<b>Female</b>		
15 years		
16 years		
17 years		
18 years		
19 years		
20 years		
<b>Female Subtotal</b>		
<b>Other</b>		
<b>Total</b>		

## **APPENDIXES B & C: FORMS**

### Instructions

Appendix B (Sampling Design) and Appendix C (Inspection Protocol) are to reflect the state's CSAP-approved sampling design and inspection protocol. These appendixes, therefore, should generally describe the design and protocol and, with the exception of Question #10 of Appendix B, are not to be modified with year-specific information. Please note that any changes to either appendix must receive CSAP's advance, written approval. To facilitate the state's completion of this section, simply cut and paste the previously approved sampling design (Appendix B) and inspection protocol (Appendix C) and respond to Question #10 of Appendix B to provide the requested information about sample size calculations for the Synar survey conducted in FFY 2024.

## APPENDIX B: SYNAR SURVEY SAMPLING METHODOLOGY

State: PR  
 FFY: 2025

**1. What type of sampling frame is used?**

- List frame (*Go to Question 2.*)
- Area frame (*Go to Question 3.*)
- List-assisted area frame (*Go to Question 2.*)

**2. List all sources of the list frame. Indicate the type of source from the list below. Provide a brief description of the frame source. Explain how the lists are updated (method), including how new outlets are identified and added to the frame. In addition, explain how often the lists are updated (cycle). (*After completing this question, go to Question 4.*)**

*Use the corresponding number to indicate Type of Source in the table below.*

- 1 – Statewide commercial business list
- 4 – Statewide retail license/permit list
- 2 – Local commercial business list
- 5 – Statewide liquor license/permit list
- 3 – Statewide tobacco license/permit list
- 6 – Other

Name of Frame Source	Type of Source	Description	Updating Method and Cycle
Permit Management Office – List of Licensed Tobacco Outlets	3	The list contained the licensed tobacco outlets within the 78 Puerto Rico municipalities.	The Permit Management Office provides MHAASA officials with an updated list of licensed tobacco on an annual basis.
Puerto Rico Department Treasury - List of Puerto Rico Licensed Tobacco Outlets	3	The list contained the licensed tobacco outlets within the 78 Puerto Rico municipalities.	The Puerto Rico Department of Treasury provides MHAASA officials with an updated list of licensed tobacco on an annual basis.
Mental Health and Anti-Addiction Services Administration (MHAASA) – List of Annual Orientations to Tobacco Outlets	6	The list contained the tobacco outlets that were oriented by MHAASA staff within the 78 Puerto Rico municipalities.	The MHAASA Tobacco Division continuously updates the database with the information collected in the orientation visits to tobacco outlets.

**3. If an area frame is used, describe how area sampling units are defined and formed.**

**a. Is any area left out in the formation of the area frame?**

- Yes    No

*If Yes, what percentage of the state’s population is not covered by the area frame?*

\_\_\_\_\_ %

**4. Federal regulation requires that vending machines be inspected as part of the Synar survey. Are vending machines included in the Synar survey?**

**Yes**    **No**

*If No, please indicate the reason(s) they are not included in the Synar survey. Please check all that apply.*

- State law bans vending machines.
- State law bans vending machines from locations accessible to youth and young adults.
- State has a contract with the FDA and is actively enforcing the vending machine requirements of the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act.
- Other (*Please describe.*) \_\_\_\_\_

*If Yes, please indicate how likely it is that vending machines will be sampled.*

- Vending machines are sampled separately to ensure vending machines are included in the sample
- Vending machines are sampled together with over the counter outlets, so it is possible that no vending machines were sampled, however they are included in the sampling frame and have a non-zero probability of selection
- Other reasons (*Please describe.*) \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Which category below best describes the sample design? (Check only one.)**

- Census** (*STOP HERE: Appendix B is complete.*)

**Unstratified statewide sample:**

- Simple random sample (*Go to Question 9.*)
- Systematic random sample (*Go to Question 6.*)
- Single-stage cluster sample (*Go to Question 8.*)
- Multistage cluster sample (*Go to Question 8.*)

**Stratified sample:**

- Simple random sample (*Go to Question 7.*)
- Systematic random sample (*Go to Question 6.*)
- Single-stage cluster sample (*Go to Question 7.*)
- Multistage cluster sample (*Go to Question 7.*)
- Other** (*Please describe and go to Question 9.*) \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Describe the systematic sampling methods. (After completing Question 6, go to Question 7 if stratification is used. Otherwise go to Question 9.)**

The sampling methodology used in this study consists of systematic sample selection. This statistical method involves selecting every kth element from a sampling frame, where k, the sampling interval, is calculated as  $k = \text{population size (N)}/\text{sample size (n)}$ . Using this procedure, each element in the population has a known and equal probability of selection. This makes systematic sampling functionally like simple random sampling. It is, however, more efficient (if the variance within the systematic sample is more than the variance of the population) and much less expensive to carry out (Daniel, W. 1995).

The sampling frame includes over-the-counter (OTC) and vending machine (VM) outlets. From the sampling frame, a starting point is chosen using a random number generator, and after that, outlets are selected at regular intervals. The systematic sample of outlets is selected to conduct the study across areas of the island represented by the 10 MHAASA Regional Prevention Centers. Each Regional Prevention Center provides prevention services to a predefined geographic region within the 78 Puerto Rico municipalities.

**7. Provide the following information about stratification.**

- a. Provide a full description of the strata that are created.**

- b. Is clustering used within the stratified sample?**

- Yes** (Go to Question 8.)  
 **No** (Go to Question 9.)

**8. Provide the following information about clustering.**

- a. Provide a full description of how clusters are formed.** (If multistage clusters are used, give definitions of clusters at each stage.)

- b. Specify the sampling method (simple random, systematic, or probability proportional to size sampling) for each stage of sampling and describe how the method(s) is (are) implemented.**

**9. Provide the following information about determining the Synar Sample.**

- a. Was the Synar Survey Estimation System (SSES) used to calculate the sample size?**

- Yes** (Respond to part b.)  
 **No** (Respond to part c and Question 10c.)

- b. SSES Sample Size Calculator used?**

- State Level** (Respond to Question 10a.)  
 **Stratum Level** (Respond to Question 10a and 10b.)

- c. Provide the formulas for determining the effective, target, and original outlet sample sizes.**

The SSES Sample Size Calculator determined the minimum adequate sample size. Below is the formula for calculating a sample size using a one-tail test:

Effective sample size:

$$\frac{1}{\left(\frac{(s.e.)^2}{P(1-P)} + \frac{1}{N}\right)}$$

where P is the maximum allowed RVR\*,  
s.e. is the standard error of the estimate, and  
N is the total number of outlets in the sample frame.

The target sample size ( $n_t$ ) is the effective sample size times the design effect from the previous year.

The original sample size is determined by:

$$n_o = (1 + s) \frac{n_t}{r_l r_c}$$

where s is the safety margin of 25%,  
 $r_l$  is the eligibility rate from previous year, and  
 $r_c$  is the completion rate from previous year.

\*Synar activities are intended to keep the RVR below the 20%. So, the relevant null hypothesis is that the true RVR is 20% or higher. Thus, the calculated sample size will allow us to test if the RVR estimate in Puerto Rico was lower than the maximum allowed RVR.

**10. Provide the following information about sample size calculations for the Synar survey conducted in FFY 2024.**

- a. If the state uses the sample size formulas embedded in the SSES Sample Size Calculator to calculate the state level sample size, please provide the following information:**

**Inputs for Effective Sample Size:**

RVR: 20%

Frame Size: 6,471

**Input for Target Sample Size:**

Design Effect: 1

**Inputs for Original Sample Size:**

Safety Margin: 25%

Accuracy (Eligibility) Rate: 84.50%

Completion Rate: 94.50%

- b. If the state uses the sample size formulas embedded in the SSES Sample Size Calculator to calculate the stratum level sample sizes, please provide the stratum level information:**

- c. If the state does not use the sample size formulas embedded in the SSES Sample Size Calculator, please provide all inputs required to calculate the effective, target, and original sample sizes as indicated in Question 9.**

## APPENDIX C: SYNAR SURVEY INSPECTION PROTOCOL SUMMARY

State: PR  
FFY: 2025

*Note: Upload to WebBGAS a copy of the Synar inspection form under the heading “Synar Inspection Form” and a copy of the protocol used to train inspection teams on conducting and reporting the results of the Synar inspections under the heading “Synar Inspection Protocol.”*

### 1. How does the state Synar survey protocol address the following?

#### a. Consummated buy attempts?

- Required
- Permitted under specified circumstances (Describe: \_\_\_\_\_ )
- Not permitted

#### b. Youth and young adult inspectors to carry ID?

- Required
- Permitted under specified circumstances (Describe: \_\_\_\_\_ )
- Not permitted

#### c. Adult inspectors to enter the outlet?

- Required
- Permitted under specified circumstances (Describe: When the retailer was found in violation, the MHAASA personnel and the Internal Revenue Service Agents entered the outlet to give a warning)
- Not permitted

#### d. Youth and young adult inspectors to be compensated?

- Required
- Permitted under specified circumstances (Describe: \_\_\_\_\_ )
- Not permitted

### 2. Identify the agency(ies) or entity(ies) that actually conduct the random, unannounced Synar inspections of tobacco outlets. (Check all that apply.)

- Law enforcement agency(ies)
- State or local government agency(ies) other than law enforcement
- Private contractor(s)
- Other

List the agency name(s): Mental Health and Anti-Addiction Services Administration and the Puerto Rico Treasury Department

**3. Are Synar inspections combined with law enforcement efforts (i.e., do law enforcement representatives issue warnings or citations to retailers found in violation of the law at the time of the inspection?)?**

Always    Usually    Sometimes    Rarely    Never

**4. Describe the type of tobacco products that are requested during Synar inspections.**

**a. What type of tobacco products are requested during the inspection?**

- Cigarettes
- Small Cigars
- Cigarillos
- Smokeless Tobacco
- Electronic Cigarettes/Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS)
- Other

**b. Describe the protocol for identifying what types of products and what brands of products are requested during an inspection.**

The youth inspectors enter the outlet selected in the sample list with discretion. They must observe where the cigarettes are located and check if there are one of the following brands: Newport or Marlboro. Youth inspectors ask the clerk for a pack of cigarettes from one of the brands mentioned. Youth inspectors are supposed to only ask the clerk once for a pack of cigarettes. If there is a smoke shop in the sample, the youth inspectors should ask for an electronic cigarette.

**5a. Describe the methods used to recruit, select, and train adult supervisors.**

MHAASA's Prevention and Mental Health Promotion Assistant Administration operates ten Regional Prevention Centers (RPC) throughout the island. Each RPC provides services to a predefined geographic region serving 78 municipalities. The manager of each RPC decided which staff of its center was the adult supervisor.

One staff member of the RPC always supervised the youth inspectors, but they never entered the outlet when the youth inspector was attempting to buy cigarettes. They were trained to provide transportation, locate the outlets, verify the locations, and supervise all inspection procedures.

When the retailer was found violating the law during the inspection, the MHAASA personnel and the Internal Revenue Agents entered the outlet to issue a warning. All the Synar personnel (RPC, staff, agents of the Puerto Rico Treasury Department, and the youth inspectors) were trained by the investigators and participated in role-playing exercises.

**5b. Describe the methods used to recruit, select, and train youth and young adult inspectors.**

The RPC staff identified candidates for youth inspectors in the geographic region. The candidates had to be 18 years of age at the time of operation and be youthful in appearance. Also, they had to have good communication skills, follow specific and general directions, be



available to work after regular hours or on weekends, and visit outlets from different municipalities in the assigned RPC. All the candidates must possess a valid identification card.

The RPC staff interviewed youth inspector candidates and submitted a listing of preliminary choices to the MHAASA Prevention Tobacco Coordinator, who conducted a second interview. In the second interview, the Tobacco Coordinator explored the applicant's interest in participating in the study, verifying the candidate's physical appearance, verbal and writing skills, capacity, and willingness to follow instructions. After the selection, applicants had to comply with the agency's contracting requirements.

Each RPC contracted at least one youth inspector to conduct the random unannounced inspection as required. Youth inspectors were trained on the inspection protocol using written materials, verbal instructions, videos, role-play exercises, and data collection methods by the investigators.

**6. Are there specific legal or procedural requirements instituted by the state to address the issue of youth and young adult inspectors' immunity when conducting inspections?**

**a. Legal**

Yes  No

*(If Yes, please describe.)*

**b. Procedural**

Yes  No

*(If Yes, please describe.)*

**7. Are there specific legal or procedural requirements instituted by the state to address the issue of the safety of youth and young adult inspectors during all aspects of the Synar inspection process?**

**a. Legal**

Yes  No

*(If Yes, please describe.)*

**b. Procedural**

Yes  No

*(If Yes, please describe.)*

Youth inspectors must follow these instructions:  
The youth inspectors are required always to use a face mask.

One staff member of the RPC always accompanies them.

Staff members do not enter the outlet when the youth attempt to buy cigarettes.

If there is a violation during the Synar inspection, all the intervention with the retailer is done by the MHAASA personnel and the Internal Revenue Agents of the Treasury Department. Immediately after the attempt to purchase was made, the youth inspectors were instructed to leave the premises.

Youth do not enter any outlet if they feel that their surroundings make them concerned about their safety, and in such cases, they are instructed to leave the premises. A further attempt is made to complete the inspection.

**8. Are there any other legal or procedural requirements the state has regarding how inspections are to be conducted (e.g., age of youth and young adult inspector, time of inspections, training that must occur)?**

**a. Legal**

Yes  No

*(If Yes, please describe.)*

Puerto Rico cannot use underage youth inspectors for the Synar Study. As amended, Puerto Rico Law 57 of 2023 forbids this for considering it a risky activity. A consultation was made with the Department of Justice, and the Children's Advocate indicated that the use of underage youth could not be approved due to an interpretation of the law that places the youth's welfare at risk.

**b. Procedural**

Yes  No

*(If Yes, please describe.)*

The youth inspectors were 18-20 years of age with a youthful appearance. The researcher trained all the youth inspectors, agents of the Department of Treasury, and RPC staff on data collection methods.

## APPENDIX D: LIST SAMPLING FRAME COVERAGE STUDY

(LIST FRAME ONLY)

State: \_\_\_\_\_  
FFY: 2025

1. Calendar year of the coverage study: \_\_\_\_\_

2. a. Unweighted percent coverage found: \_\_\_\_\_%  
b. Weighted percent coverage found: \_\_\_\_\_%  
c. Number of outlets found through canvassing: \_\_\_\_\_  
d. Number of outlets matched on the list frame: \_\_\_\_\_

3. a. Describe how areas were defined. (e.g., census tracts, counties, etc.)

b. Were any areas of the state excluded from sampling?

Yes  No

*If Yes, please explain.*

4. Please answer the following questions about the selection of canvassing areas.

a. Which category below best describes the sample design? (Check only one.)

Census (Go to Question 6.)

**Unstratified statewide sample:**

Simple random sample (Respond to Part b.)

Systematic random sample (Respond to Part b.)

Single-stage cluster sample (Respond to Parts b and d.)

Multistage cluster sample (Respond to Parts b and d.)

**Stratified sample:**

Simple random sample (Respond to Parts b and c.)

Systematic random sample (Respond to Parts b and c.)

Single-stage cluster sample (Respond to Parts b, c, and d.)

Multistage cluster sample (Respond to Parts b, c, and d.)

**Other** (Please describe and respond to Part b.) \_\_\_\_\_

b. Describe the sampling methods.

c. Provide a full description of the strata that were created.

d. Provide a full description of how clusters were formed.

5. Were borders of the selected areas clearly identified at the time of canvassing?

Yes  No

6. Were all sampled areas visited by canvassing teams?

Yes (*Go to Question 7.*)  No (*Respond to Parts a and b.*)

a. Was the subset of areas randomly chosen?

Yes  No

b. Describe how the subsample of visited areas was drawn. Include the number of areas sampled and the number of areas canvassed.

7. Were field observers provided with a detailed map of the canvassing areas?

Yes  No

*If No, describe the canvassing instructions given to the field observers.*

8. Were field observers instructed to find all outlets in the assigned area?

Yes  No

*If No, respond to Question 9.*

*If Yes, describe any instructions given to the field observers to ensure the entire area was canvassed, then go to Question 10.*

9. If a full canvassing was not conducted:

a. How many predetermined outlets were to be observed in each area? \_\_\_\_\_

b. What were the starting points for each area? \_\_\_\_\_

c. Were these starting points randomly chosen?

Yes  No

d. Describe the selection of the starting points.

- e. Please describe the canvassing instructions given to the field observers, including predetermined routes.

10. Describe the process field observers used to determine if an outlet sold tobacco.

11. Please provide the state's definition of "matches" or "mismatches" to the Synar sampling frame? (i.e., address, business name, business license number, etc.)

12. Provide the calculation of the weighted percent coverage (if applicable).