

## Instructions for Interviewers Administering the Timeline Followback Calendar to Drinkers

### PAPER AND PENCIL VERSION

- What we would like you to do is recall your drinking for the past ## days.
- We want to get an idea of how much alcohol you consumed on each day during this time.
- This is not a difficult task, especially when you use a calendar like this one (show sample calendar).
- What the calendar does is give you a VISUAL PICTURE of the dates and patterns of your drinking.
- What we have found is that calendars are very useful in helping people recall their drinking.
- On this sample calendar (show person sample calendar), as you can see, a number has been filled in for each day.
- The idea is to record the number of drinks you consumed each day.
- On days when you did not drink any alcohol, not even a sip of a drink, you would write ,“O.”
- For days when you had something to drink, you would write in the number of drinks YOU consumed.
- THE IMPORTANT THING IS TO MAKE SURE SOMETHING IS WRITTEN IN FOR EACH DAY ON THE CALENDAR!
- It is important that you record your drinking on the calendar in terms of Standard Drinks. This is because different types of beverages contain different concentrations of alcohol.
- This card shows what a Standard Drink is: (standard drink card is shown to the person)

One Standard Drink is equal to: one 12 oz regular beer <i>which is equal to</i> one 5 oz glass of regular wine <i>which is equal to</i> 1.5 oz of spirits such as vodka or whiskey
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- What type of alcoholic beverage do you typically drink? (Respondent replies)
- So if you had six beers on a given day, what would you write down? (Respondent replies)
- Now if you mix your types of drinks, using Standard Drinks is also easy. For example, if you had two regular beers and three 5-oz glasses of wine, how many Standard Drinks would you write down? (Respondent replies)
- Do you think you understand how to report using Standard Drinks? (Respondent replies)

### HELPFUL HINTS

There are a few other helpful tips that can aid you in reporting your drinking on the calendar.

- If you have an appointment book or a daily diary, you can use it to help you recall your use.
- Standard holidays such as Halloween and Christmas are marked on the calendar to help you recall your drinking around these times. You can also write in personal holidays and events such as birthdays, vacations, celebrations, major sporting events (e.g., World Series) and so on.
- People who have fairly regular drinking patterns can use such patterns to help them fill out the calendar. For example, you may have a weekend/weekday change in your drinking or your drinking may be different depending on the season, or whether you are on holidays or business trips, or you may drink every Thursday when playing cards.

### YOUR BEST ESTIMATE

- In filling out the calendar, we want you to be as accurate as possible.
- We realize that it is hard for anyone to recall things with 100-percent accuracy, whether it is drinking or anything else.

- If you can't recall whether you drank on a Monday or a Thursday of a certain week, or whether it was the week of November 9th or November 16th, GIVE IT YOUR BEST GUESS.
- If you are not sure whether you drank 15, 16, or 17 drinks, choose the midpoint of the range, so for 15 to 17 drinks, you would write "16" drinks.

The important point here is that 15 to 17 drinks is very different than if you said you drank only 1 or 2 drinks or 30 to 15 drinks. Does that make sense? (Respondent replies)

- Remember: Your job is to provide your best daily estimate using the calendar.

#### START CALENDAR WITH RESPONDENT

- Let's begin! As I said before, what we want you to do is use the calendar to record your drinking over the past ## days.
- Let's start with yesterday (date) and go back ## days — Those dates are (date) through (date). (Interviewer marks these dates on the calendar and shows the respondent.)
- Do you have any special holidays or dates you want to mark on the calendar to help you better recall your drinking during the past ## days? (Respondent replies and fills in calendar if appropriate.)
- When did you last drink in this ## day period? (Respondent replies with a date.)
- How much did you drink on this day? (Respondent replies with an amount and interviewer puts that number in on the calendar for the appropriate date.)
- What was the greatest amount you consumed on any given day during this period? Do you recall when this occurred? (Respondent replies with an amount and a date.)
- What was the least amount of drinking during this period? (Respondent replies with an amount.)
- As mentioned earlier, some people will have patterns to their drinking that can help them recall their use. Do you have any notable patterns to your drinking? (Respondent replies)

#### PROBING EXTENDED ABSTINENT OR DRINKING PERIODS

- During this period of time, did you have any extended periods of abstinence of 7 days or more when you did not drink any alcohol at all, not even a drop? (Respondent replies)
  - What was the longest period of total abstinence during this time?
  - What was the next longest period of total abstinence?
- During this period of time, did you have any extended periods of heavy drinking of 7 days or more? (Respondent replies)
  - What was the longest number of continuous days in a row you were drinking during this period? (Determine dates and amounts of alcohol consumed on each day.)
  - What was the next longest period of continuous drinking days?
- You appear ready to fill in the rest of the calendar. Do you have any questions?
- If not, let's begin. If you have any questions, I will be (wherever interviewer will be).

#### NOTE TO INTERVIEWERS: COMPLETING THE CALENDAR IN A FLEXIBLE MANNER

People can start from either end of the calendar and work forward or backward, or jump around from month to month.

If someone has trouble recalling his/her drinking, try working back from the date of the Interview. Say, "What about this past month; what was your drinking like then?" The most recent months are often more familiar, and the person might find it easier to reflect upon those periods first.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## TIMELINE FOLLOWBACK CALENDAR: 2004

**Complete the Following Information**

☒ Number of days to gather information: \_\_\_\_\_ days

☒ Start Date (Day 1): \_\_\_\_\_

DY      MO      YR

☒ End Date (yesterday): \_\_\_\_\_

DY      MO      YR

2004	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
					1 <sup>New Year's Day</sup>	2	3
<b>J A N</b>	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	18	19 <sup>M. Luther King</sup>	20	21	22	23	24
	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
<b>F E B</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14 <sup>Valentine's</sup>
	15	16 <sup>Pres. Day</sup>	17	18	19	20	21
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
<b>M A R</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	15	16	17 <sup>St. Patrick's Day</sup>	18	19	20	21
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	29	30	31	1	2	3	4
<b>A P R</b>	5	6	7	8	9	10 <sup>Good Friday</sup>	11 <sup>Passover</sup>
	12 <sup>Easter</sup>	13	14	15	16	17	18
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	26	27	28	29	30	1	2
<b>M A Y</b>	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	10 <sup>Mother's Day</sup>	11	12	13	14	15	16
	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	24	25 <sup>Memorial Day</sup>	26	27	28	29	30
	31						

2004	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>J</b>	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
<b>U</b>	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
<b>N</b>	21 Father's Day	22	23	24	25	26	27
	28	29	30	1	2	3	4 Independ. Day
<b>J</b>	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
<b>U</b>	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
<b>L</b>	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	26	27	28	29	30	31	1
<b>A</b>	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>U</b>	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
<b>G</b>	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
	30	31	1	2	3	4	5
<b>S</b>	6	7 Labor Day	8	9	10	11	12
<b>E</b>	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
<b>P</b>	20	21 Rosh Hashanah	22	23	24	25	26
	27	28	29	30 Yom Kippur	1	2	3
<b>O</b>	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>C</b>	11	12 Columbus Day	13	14	15	16	17
<b>T</b>	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	25	26	27	28	29	30	31 Halloween
<b>N</b>	1	2	3 Election Day	4	5	6	7
<b>O</b>	8	9	10	11 Veteran's Day	12	13	14
<b>V</b>	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	22	23	24	25	26 Thanksgiving	27	28
	29	30	1	2	3	4	5
<b>D</b>	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<b>E</b>	13	14 Hanukkah	15	16	17	18	19
<b>C</b>	20	21	22	23	24	25 Christmas	26
	27	28	29	30	31		

## STANDARD DRINK CONVERSION

One Standard Drink is equal to:



BEER (5% alcohol) 12 oz. (341 ml.)



WINE (12-17%) 5 oz. *or*

FORTIFIED WINE 3 oz.



HARD LIQUOR 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> oz.  
(80-proof)

*1 Standard Drink represents 14.0 grams of absolute alcohol*



### WINE: 1 Bottle

25 oz./750 ml. = 5 standard drinks

40 oz./1.14 L. = 8 standard drinks

25 oz. Fortified = 8 standard drinks



### HARD LIQUOR: 1 Bottle

12 oz. (mickey) = 8 standard drinks

25 oz./750 ml. = 17 standard drinks

40 oz./1.14 L. = 27 standard drinks

*For light beer or light wine, standard drinks are calculated in terms of a ratio. For example, 12 oz. of a 2.5% light beer = 0.5 SDs, while 12 oz. of a 4% light beer = 0.8 SDs.*