

# Texas Nutrition Environment Assessment in Restaurants (TxNEA-R) Tool Rater Protocol Training

Slides available at <http://www.dshs.texas.gov/Obesity/TXNEAR/>



Welcome to the Texas Nutrition Environment Assessment in Restaurants, or TxNEA-R, tool rater protocol training developed by the Texas Department of State Health Services, Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention Section. This training is meant for raters, who visit prepared food outlets to assess the nutrition environment, and project coordinators, who oversee a community assessment. A prepared food outlet is a foodservice establishment that sells prepared foods that are ready to eat. Before completing this training, project coordinators should complete the Background training.

An accessible copy of the slides and script is available at the link on the slide to follow along. Other important materials available at the link include the tool, background and coordinator trainings, manual, and forms to organize the project.

## Training Objectives



**After successful completion of this training, raters will be able to understand:**

- **Protocols for engaging food outlet managers**
- **Protocols for data collection**

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After successful completion of this training, raters will be able to understand:

- Protocols for engaging food outlet managers; and
- Protocols for data collection

Toward the end of the training, there will be a knowledge assessment and reminder of the next steps.


If you have questions, contact information will be provided at the end of the presentation. Let's begin.

# Protocols



First, we will discuss the protocols that help raters prepare for and successfully use the TxNEA-R tool.

Rater ID



**Texas Nutrition Environment Assessment in Restaurants (TxNEA-R) Survey**

4-Digit Survey Number

3-Digit Rater ID:

Date:

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Your project coordinator will send you your Rater ID, which helps the project coordinator keep track of who filled out which surveys, in case any questions arise later.

The Rater ID is entered in the online data collection quiz and on every survey.

- **Background training (recommended)**
- **Rater training and quiz**

A recommended practice is to complete the online training on the tool background that is required for the project coordinator. It discusses characteristics of the tool, uses for the tool, and when the tool is not useful.

This will help raters understand the bigger picture of the tool's purpose and what types of interventions can result. It can also help equip raters to better present the project to food outlet managers and answer their questions.

This rater training describes the protocols for approaching food outlet managers and gaining their agreement in working on improving the environment of their food outlet and collecting data using the tool.

This training helps raters successfully use the TxNEA-R tool and create positive relationships with food outlet managers to facilitate resulting interventions to improve the prepared food environment.

## Tool Formats



Paper Tool	Survey Monkey
Survey, instructions, glossary are separate documents.	Survey, instructions, and glossary are integrated.
Can be completed out of order.	Can be completed out of order but must begin at the beginning and end at the end.
Data must be entered later into the Survey Monkey survey after data collection.	Data is collected and entered at the same time.

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- You may use the paper or electronic version of the tool to assess prepared food outlets.
- The electronic version of the tool is available on Survey Monkey, an online survey software platform. In this version, the survey, instructions, and glossary are included in the question. The online tool can be accessed on a computer or a smart device. A practice version of the TxNEA-R tool is available on Survey Monkey; data entered into the practice version will not be included in the assessment.
- If using the paper version of the tool, the survey, instructions, and glossary are separate documents. After collecting the data using the paper document, enter the data in the TxNEA-R survey on Survey Monkey using the link provided by your project coordinator. Your project coordinator may choose to collect your paper survey.

The survey can be completed out of order, but it is easier to skip around on the paper survey. On Survey Monkey, the survey always starts at the beginning and ends at the end, so more time is spent navigating if you prefer to skip around.

## Practice tool and debrief



- **Practice using the paper copy of the tool to conduct the assessment and Rater Form.**
  - Make a note of any questions.
- **Debrief with your project coordinator.**
- **Practice using the practice tool on Survey Monkey.**

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- After completing the data collection training and passing the quiz at the end, practice using the paper copy of the tool. Choose a prepared food outlet and conduct the assessment. Practice using the protocols for data collection. Practice using Rater Form and the protocols. Explain to the food outlet manager which organization you are with and that you are practicing the tool and ask for their permission to proceed. Explain that the data from the assessment will not be used.

- Surveys entered into the TxNEA-R Practice Copy will not be counted in the assessment. Follow your project coordinator's instructions on which food outlet to choose for the practice survey.

- Practicing will help you become familiar with the tool and protocols and to seek answers to any resulting questions. This experience will also help raters practice answering questions from food outlet managers about the tool and process.

- Try to choose a food outlet with a children's menu so that the entire survey is shown. If there is no children's menu, you will not be able to practice this part of the assessment. Make a note of any questions you have.

- After you finish a practice assessment, debrief with your project coordinator and ask any questions you may have.

- If you plan to use the Survey Monkey, practice using it at home to become familiar with it.

## Before going into the field



- **Receive a list of survey numbers and food outlets from your project coordinator and organize this information using the Rater Form.**
- **Check to see when your food outlets are open and plan when to assess each food outlet.**
  - If any of your food outlets are no longer in business, notify your project coordinator.
- **Plan when to visit the food outlets and map a route.**
  - A recommended time to visit is mid-afternoon, ~2-4pm.

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Before going into the field,

- Receive a list of survey numbers and food outlets from your project coordinator and organize this information using the Rater Form, which will help you stay organized throughout the process. The Rater Form is located at the link on the first slide. You may be paired with another rater to visit the food outlet managers and conduct the assessment.
- Check to see when your food outlets are open and plan when to assess each food



outlet.

- If any of your food outlets are no longer in business, note this on the Rater Form and notify your project coordinator.
- Plan when to visit the food outlets and map a route. It may take one or two visits with the food outlet manager to make sure they are comfortable with the project before you conduct the actual assessment. Another option is to call the restaurant prior to the assessment to identify a time when business is slow and the manager or staff is available to answer questions. Slow times are usually mid-afternoon, around 2-4pm, between lunch and dinner.

For the actual assessment, budget up to an hour for larger food outlets with larger more complex menus.

## Checklist for Field Assessments



- **Rater Form – Rater ID, Survey Numbers**
- **List of food outlets and corresponding survey numbers**
- **Mapped route to food outlets**
- **Smart device with internet access and link to survey OR paper surveys, instructions, glossary, and pencil**
- **Information for food outlet managers, if available**
- **Optional : scratch paper and pencil for tallying menu options**

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Take the following items with you on field assessments:

- The Rater Form, which has the Rater ID, and Survey Numbers
- A list of food outlets and corresponding survey numbers
- A mapped route to food outlets
- A smart device with internet access and link to the survey OR paper surveys, instructions, glossary, pencil
- Any materials that your project coordinator has provided to inform the food outlet managers.
- You may wish to bring extra surveys to use as scratch paper and a pencil for tallying menu options.

This checklist is also on the Rater Form.

- **Before assessing the food outlet, obtain consent from the manager.**
- **Introduce yourself to the manager. Explain the project, its intended outcomes, and the manager's role in creating an environment that promotes healthy choices.**
- **Go during a slow time.**

After entering the food outlet,

- To build trust and a positive working relationship with food outlet managers, gauge their interest in partnering with your organization on the project and obtain their consent to complete the assessment at their prepared food outlet. Managers who are on board with the project are much more likely to work with you after the assessment.
- Plan to visit the prepared food outlet at a less busy time, such as 2-4 pm between lunch and dinner. Avoid going during busy times, such as during lunch rush, usually 11:30-1:30, and dinner rush, usually around 6-8. Especially avoid going during Friday or Saturday dinner which tend to be the busiest times.
- When you get there, humbly approach the foodservice manager. Explain which organization you work with, the objectives of the project, and how this could benefit the manager's business. Ask if they would be willing to take a few minutes to hear more about the project. Explain that any resulting collaboration between your organization and the food outlet manager is meant to increase profit or at least break even.
- Repeated visits may be needed if a manager is not there when you visit.
- If your project has printed information on the health problem and the importance of the food outlet manager, present this to the manager.

- If the manager is interested, ask about their willingness to allow you to assess their prepared food outlet. Offer to share the results with them.
- If the manager is not interested, offer to leave some information for them to look over and your contact information, and thank them for their time.

## Outside the Food Outlet



- **If the store is not open, make a note on the Rater Form and go to the next location. Check the store hours and plan a time to return.**
- **If the store is a gas station/convenience store, check if they serve prepared foods first.**
- **Complete Section “A. Outside the Food Outlet” of the survey.**

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Use the following protocols when outside of the food outlet:

- If the store is not open at the time of your visit, make a note on the Rater Form and go to the next location. Check the store hours and plan a time to return.
- If the store is a gas station/convenience store, check if they serve prepared foods first.
- Complete Section “A. Outside the Food Outlet” of the survey.

- **Carefully complete the rest of the survey using the instructions and glossary.**
  - You may do this at home.
- **Check your survey for completeness before leaving the food outlet.**
- **Ask the staff questions if needed.**

Inside the food outlet,

- Carefully complete the rest of the survey using the instructions and glossary. Alternatively, you may ask for a To-Go menu or use the information on the food outlet's website to complete this part at home. Remember to take note of any options not on the To Go menu, such as the day's specials, in the Comments section.
- Check your survey for completeness before leaving the food outlet.
- Ask the staff questions if needed.
  - For example, you might need to ask staff if the drinks come with free refills or what the age limit is on the children's menu.

- **Establish trust and rapport.**
- **Respect manager's time and independence.**
- **When proposing strategies, start with ones that are less risky and less work for managers and staff.**
- **Maintain communication.**
- **Communicate in their language.**

Your relationship with the manager or owner of a food outlet is crucial to the success of implementing any type of change in their business.

- Develop rapport with owners to establish trust and rapport.
- Respect the manager's independence. Remember that the food outlet is their business, they are the expert on their business and customer base, and that they are the ultimate decision maker of how the business is run.
- Respect manager's time. For example, wait until customers are served to communicate with the manager.
- When proposing strategies, you can start with ones that require less work and risk on the part of the owner or manager. Once trust is developed, you may consider proposing additional strategies that are more risky or require more work on the part of the owner or manager.
- After the assessment is completed, maintain communication with owners and incorporate their ideas into strategy development.
- Use the language they are most comfortable with. Provide materials in the owner's language if it is not English. Try learning some simple phrases in their native language.

Reference: Lessons learned from Baltimore Healthy Carryouts

<http://bmcpublichealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/1471-2458-13-638>



## Questions to Anticipate



### ***Are you a health inspector or with the media?***

- (Show ID) No, I am working with [organization name] to fill out a survey to make healthy restaurant choices easier for customers. If you are ok with this, I will stay out of the way and be done in a few minutes.

### ***What will you do with this information?***

- I am not with the media or any restaurant review site. We will use the information to work with restaurants to make healthy choices easier. Your restaurant's information will remain confidential.

Raters may encounter questions at the food outlet.

If someone asks if you are a health inspector, show them your ID. Tell them that you are not a health inspector and which organization you are working with to make healthy restaurant choices easier for customers.

If someone asks what you will do with the information, explain that you are not with the media or any restaurant review site such as Zagat or Yelp. Explain how the information will be used and assure them that the information will remain confidential. You can also ask if they would be interested in seeing the information and offer to share it with them.

## After leaving the food outlet



- **If using paper surveys:**
  - Check the survey for completeness.
  - Enter your surveys on Survey Monkey.
- **Update the Rater Form.**
- **When your assessments are complete, send your completed Rater Form to your project coordinator.**

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After leaving the food outlet,

- **If using paper surveys:**
  - Check the survey for completeness. If information is missing, call the food outlet or check their website.
  - Then enter your surveys on you project's Survey Monkey link. Do not use the Practice survey.

At the end of the project when all surveys are complete,

- Update the Rater Form and provide it to your project coordinator.

## Activity! Protocols



Next is an activity on preparation protocols.

Before going into the field, raters must:



- A. Complete the data collection training and pass the quiz at the end.**
- B. Practice using the tool at one prepared food outlet. Make a note of any questions and debrief with the project coordinator.**
- C. Fill out the Rater Form with the Rater ID, and survey numbers.**
- D. Prepare the items on the checklist.**
- E. All of the above**

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Before going into the field, raters must:

- A. Complete the data collection training and pass the quiz at the end.
- B. Practice using the tool at one prepared food outlet. Make a note of any questions and debrief with the project coordinator.
- C. Fill out the Rater Form with the Rater ID, and survey numbers.
- D. Bring the items on the checklist.
- E. All of the above

Before going into the field, raters must:



**A. Complete the data collection training and pass the quiz at the end.**

**B. Practice using the tool at one restaurant using the Practice Copy survey. Make a note of any questions and debrief with the project coordinator.**

**C. Fill out the Rater Form with the Rater ID and survey numbers.**

**D. Prepare the items on the checklist.**

**E. All of the above**

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If you chose answer E, you are correct.

## Why must raters engage food outlet managers?



- A. To build a strong working relationship**
- B. To gain their consent to conduct the assessment.**
- C. To educate them about their role in creating healthy environments**
- D. To gain their participation for a resulting intervention.**
- E. All of the above**

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- E. All of the above**

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If you chose answer E, you are correct.

## Next Steps



- **Complete the data collection training.**
- **If you plan to use the Survey Monkey survey on your smart device, practice using it at home.**

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• Complete the data collection training to learn more about the tool, instructions, and glossary definitions.

• If you plan to use Survey Monkey at the food outlet, practice using it at home using the practice version of the survey and an online or take-away menu.



## Questions? Contact your project coordinator or DSHS.

Nutrition Specialist  
[bringinghealthyback@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:bringinghealthyback@dshs.state.tx.us)

You have completed the Texas Nutrition Environment Assessment in Restaurants (TxNEA-R) Tool training on rater protocols. For questions, raters may contact the project coordinator, and project coordinators may contact the nutrition specialist at the Texas Department of State Health Services.