

## **CONSENT TO TAKE PART IN A RESEARCH STUDY LAY INTERVIEW**

**TITLE OF STUDY:** The lived experience of air quality change.

**Principal Investigator:** Norah MacKendrick, Ph.D.

This consent form is part of an informed consent process for a research study and it will provide information that will help you decide whether you want to take part in this study. It is your choice to take part or not. After all of your questions have been answered and you wish to take part in the research study, you will be asked to give verbal consent. You will be given a copy of the consent form to keep. Your alternative to taking part in the research is not to take part in it.

### **Who is conducting this research study and what is it about?**

You are being asked to take part in research being conducted by Norah MacKendrick, PhD, who is a professor in the Department of Sociology at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey. The purpose of this study is to understand how people experience bad air quality as well extreme heat events.

### **What will I be asked to do if I take part?**

You are asked to take part in an interview with the possibility of being invited for a shorter, follow-up interview consisting of a subset of questions asked in the first interview.

The interview will take about 30 to 90 minutes to complete. We anticipate that about 200 subjects will take part in the study.

With your permission, Dr. MacKendrick would like to audio record the interview and will ask for your consent to record. If the interview takes place over Zoom, it is your choice to enable the video, but the microphone must be enabled. Note that Zoom automatically records video along with the audio, but Dr. MacKendrick will delete the video file within 24 hours of the interview. If the interview takes place in-person or over the phone, Dr. MacKendrick would like to audio record the conversation. Dr. MacKendrick will ask for your permission before recording the interview. You do not have to agree to be recorded to be in this study. If you do not agree to be recorded, Dr. MacKendrick will take handwritten notes.

### **What are the risks and/or discomforts I might experience if I take part in the study?**

Breach of confidentiality is a risk of harm but a data security plan is in place to minimize such a risk. Also, it is possible that some questions may make you feel uncomfortable. If that happens, you can skip those questions or withdraw from the study altogether. If you decide to quit the interview your responses will NOT be saved. You are in control of what information you share with the researcher.

### **Are there any benefits to me if I choose to take part in this study?**

There are no direct benefits to you for taking part in this research. You will be contributing to knowledge about how people experience changes in air quality and weather.

### **Will I be paid to take part in this study?**

You will be paid with a \$25 electronic gift card to Target that you will receive within 48 hours after completion of the interview. To receive the gift card, you must complete all the interview. If you are invited to a follow-up interview, you will be paid with another \$25 electronic gift card to Target that you will receive within 2 weeks of the completion of the interview. If you are invited to a follow up interview, Dr. MacKendrick will re-confirm your consent using this consent form.

### **How will information about me be kept private or confidential?**

Information you designate as confidential (e.g., "this is off the record" or "do not share that information with anyone") will be erased from the audio file and removed from the transcript.

Your name, occupation, workplace, neighborhood, name and brand of air sensor you use, names of any family members if you utter them, will be removed from the audio file and transcript, but all other information will be retained in the audio file and transcript and will be used for analysis in the study.

We will have recordings that can identify you because they will have your voice and any utterances of details of your life or work if you have shared them. If video recordings are made, Dr. MacKendrick will delete the video file within 24 hours of the meeting and rely solely on the audio recording for the research. Dr. MacKendrick will destroy the audio recordings after they have been transcribed and cross-checked for accuracy. Transcripts from the interview will be stored in a password protected folder that only the PI has access to.

Transcripts will not include any direct identifiers (your name, name of your workplace or family members if you mention them.) Any handwritten interview notes will be stored in a locked cabinet controlled by the investigator. Handwritten notes may be converted to digital format and stored on a password-protected computer that can only be accessed by the study team. Paper copies will then be destroyed.

As part of scheduling this interview, we asked you for your name and municipality. This information will not be stored with your responses. Your responses will be assigned a subject number and pseudonym which will be stored separately from your identifiable information so others will not know which responses are yours. Your pseudonym and short quotes from our interview may appear in publications but with some background details about you altered as an extra layer of privacy. When data collection is complete, your identifiable information will be destroyed so no link will exist between your identity and your responses. No information that can identify you will appear in any professional presentation or publication.

We will ask you at the end of the interview if you consent to being contacted for a follow-up interview. If you consent, we will make a note of that in a separate database not linked to your interview answers or transcript. Within two years of your interview, we will contact you using the email or phone number you provide to inquire about scheduling a follow-up interview. Know that even if you accept a follow up invitation today, you are free to decline to participate later. If we schedule a follow-up interview, you will be asked again to give your consent to participate and audio record.

### **What will happen to information I provide in the research after the study is over?**

There is no plan to delete the responses. We plan to study the data for some time.

If you would like a copy of your transcript, a transcript will be shared with you by email. Please contact the PI to arrange this.

Anonymized transcripts *may* be used or distributed to investigators for other research without obtaining additional informed consent from you. As an anonymized transcript, it has no identifying information about you. This means it uses a pseudonym, and any background details about you (e.g., your name, names of your family members if you mention them, municipality, neighborhood, workplace, any details about your life history if you share them) are removed.

In addition, your anonymized transcript *may* be stored in the Qualitative Data Repository at the Maxwell School at Syracuse University to allow other researchers to use data we collect from you for their own research purposes. Any transcript stored in the repository will have an additional layer of anonymity added to it, where other specific details about your life (e.g., marital status, general occupation, municipality) will be removed from the transcript.

You can request not to have your anonymized transcript shared outside the study team. Please notify the PI of the study before, during or immediately after the interview.

**What will happen if I do not want to take part or decide later not to stay in the study?**

Your participation is voluntary. If you choose to take part now, you may change your mind and withdraw before the end of the interview. In addition, you can choose to skip interview questions that you are not comfortable answering or stop the interview at any time.

You may withdraw your consent for use of responses you provided during the interview, but you must do this in writing by email to the PI within 5 business days of the interview. After that time you can no longer withdraw your response as the PI will not know which transcript is yours as she will have de-identified it and assigned it pseudonym and subject number.

To withdraw your response, write to the PI, Norah MacKendrick at [norah.mackendrick@rutgers.edu](mailto:norah.mackendrick@rutgers.edu).

**Who can I call if I have questions?**

If you have questions about taking part in this study, you can contact the Principal Investigator: Dr. Norah MacKendrick, PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ 08901. [norah.mackendrick@rutgers.edu](mailto:norah.mackendrick@rutgers.edu). Tel: (848) 932-7628.

If you have questions, concerns, problems, information or input about the research or would like to know your rights as a research subject, you can contact the Rutgers IRB or the Rutgers Human Subjects Protection Program via phone at (973) 972-3608 or (732) 235-2866 or (732) 235-9806 OR via email [irboffice@research.rutgers.edu](mailto:irboffice@research.rutgers.edu), or you can write us at 335 George Street, Liberty Plaza Suite 3200, New Brunswick, NJ 08901.

Please keep this consent form if you would like a copy of it for your files.

By beginning the interview you acknowledge that you are 18 years of age or older, have read the information and agree to take part in the research, with the knowledge that you are free to withdraw your participation without penalty.