

WisDOT Relocation Template Letter and Questionnaire



Supplemental Guidance

Refer to [FDM Chapter 25](#) and [Chapter 5 of the Real Estate Program Manual](#) for additional information about relocations and WisDOT processes and procedures.

Questions – contact katherine.bruni@dot.wi.gov

Intent

The intent of this document is to provide background and guidance for the utilization WisDOT's Relocation Template Letter and Relocation Questionnaire (See Appendix A & B).

Background

In a continued effort to comply with the Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Act (49 CFR 24), FHWA's Title VI Program (23 CFR 200), legal requirements relating to public involvement and environmental impacts (i.e. 23 USC 139 and 23 CFR 771), WisDOT's Environmental Services Section in coordination with the Environmental Process and Documentation Section and Real Estate staff has developed a Relocation Questionnaire and Relocation Template Letter. The intent of these documents is to provide a uniform approach to demographic data collection that project teams will be able to utilize on projects where relocations of residences and/or businesses are anticipated as a result of the proposed action.

Per 23 CFR 200.9(b)(4), WisDOT has a requirement to develop procedures for the collection of statistical data (race, color, religion, sex, and national origin) of participants in, and beneficiaries of State highway programs, *i.e.*, relocatees, impacted citizens and affected communities. Further, 23 CFR 771.105(g) asserts that "no person, because of handicap, age, race, color, sex, or national origin, be excluded from participating in, or denied benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any Administration program or procedural activity."

To accomplish these directives, projects that anticipate relocations should utilize the Relocation Questionnaire and Relocation Template Letter after a Public Involvement Meeting (PIM) has occurred and prior to NEPA signature. This will allow for the opportunity for the potential relocatee to have attended the PIM to gain an understanding of the entire project and potential impacts as well as have initial contact with the project team to voice comments or concerns with the potential alternatives. The questionnaire then serves as an additional, focused public involvement effort to help inform impact evaluations during the NEPA process.

Questionnaire Utilization Steps

1. Ensure that a Public Involvement Meeting has already occurred so that potential relocatees will have already had an opportunity to engage with the project.
2. Download the [WisDOT Relocation Questionnaire](#) and [Relocation Template Letter](#) from WisDOT's Environmental Forms & Tools Webpage.
3. Fill out the sections highlighted in **yellow** on the Relocation Template Letter as well as the Relocation Questionnaire.
4. Send the Questionnaire and the Template Letter, along with a pre-stamped and addressed envelope to any potential relocatees.
 - a. Examples:
 - i. If the project area currently has a rural stop-controlled intersection with one residence in each quadrant and there is a proposal for a roundabout to be put in, each household should receive the questionnaire.
 - ii. If there is an apartment complex, or other multifamily housing unit, each tenant household should receive a questionnaire as well as the property owner.
 - iii. If a proposed acquisition is substantial enough to introduce concern that only an uneconomic remanent would remain after the project was completed, even if the dwelling itself does not necessarily need to be acquired, the household that may be left with that uneconomic remnant should receive the questionnaire.
 - b. Once the questionnaire(s) is sent out, there is a two-week response window. If a response is not received from any (or multiple) property owners, renters, or residents, a second, follow-up survey should be sent to those individuals.
 - c. It is imperative to always include a pre-stamped return envelope so as to not present a hardship to those who may respond to the questionnaire.
 - i. It is recommended that the pre-stamped return envelope include the respondent's name if known, as the questionnaire does **not** have a name field.

- d. If, after two more weeks, no response has been received from one or more recipient, the project team should document their efforts to collect data, as well as compile any responses that were received.
- 5. Comments provided on the questionnaire should be considered as a part of the public involvement process and responses should be provided to the commentor by the project team, if warranted.
 - a. Similar to other public involvement efforts, any comments received from the public and the responses provided by the project team, should be documented in the Public Involvement section of the environmental document.
 - b. Responses are confidential, not anonymous, so it will be known to the project team who provided the response.
- 6. All information, including copies of the questionnaire(s) and letter(s), mailing lists, and responses received should be saved to the project file.
 - a. In addition, if a property owner or occupant did not respond to the questionnaire, that should be noted and saved to the project file.
- 7. For tracking purposes, once this process is completed, please send an email to katherine.bruni@dot.wi.gov including the project ID and a link to the box folder where responses or documentation of non-responses are stored.

Personally identifiable information from the relocation questionnaires should not be included in the NEPA document. If an Open Records request (or a Freedom of Information Act request) would be inclusive of the personal data obtained from these questionnaires, WisDOT will have to utilize the balancing test to determine whether to release the records. Although WisDOT must analyze each request and decide on a case-by-case basis, a strong case could be made that redacting personal identifiable information is more important than the public's right to the record because it enables more accurate responses which allows WisDOT to assess project impacts as required under federal law. The non-personal identifiable information would still have to be released.

Appendix A – Relocation Template Letter

(DATE)

(NAME)

(ADDRESS)

(ADDRESS)

RE: (PROJECT NAME)
(PROJECT LOCATION)
(WisDOT Project ID)

Dear (NAME):

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) has proposed improvements to (INSERT ROUTE AND LOCATION INFORMATION). The purpose of this project is to (INSERT SUMMARY OF PURPOSE STATEMENT). Attached for your information are (INSERT DESCRIPTION OF ATTACHMENTS AND ATTACH THE PURPOSE AND NEED STATEMENT, MAPS, GENERAL SCHEDULE, ETC) that you may find useful in your consideration of this project.

Because your property may be acquired in order to construct the project, you are being contacted to provide information so that WisDOT can understand how this may affect you or persons who may rely upon you. This survey is designed to gather information on the demographics of those that may be directly impacted by the project. No decisions have yet been made and ultimately your property may not be affected by the transportation project. Answering these questions is voluntary, however your opinion is important to us.

Thank you for your time and patience in answering these questions. This information will help us to develop a project that will best serve the community and the region. If you would like to receive or provide additional information regarding this matter, please contact:

(Insert contact name of WisDOT Project Manager)

(Insert contact address)

(Insert project phone number)

(Insert contact email address)

We respectfully request your response be submitted no later than two weeks from the receipt of this request (**INSERT RESPONSE DATE**). Please use the enclosed stamped envelope to return the completed questionnaire at no expense to you.

Thanks again, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

(NAME)

WisDOT Project Manager

Wisconsin Department of Transportation

Appendix B – WisDOT Relocation Questionnaire

Project ID; Roadway Name

County

WisDOT **PROJECT NAME** Relocation Questionnaire

Please complete the following questionnaire to the best of your ability. All questions are entirely voluntary; however, your opinion is important to us. Once you have completed the survey, please return it to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation using the pre-addressed and stamped envelope that was provided. This information will help us to develop a project that will best serve the community and the region. Thank you for your time and patience in answering these questions.

What is your preferred method of contact?

- ☐ In-person meeting ☐ E-mail (Please provide email address below)
- ☐ U.S. Mail ☐ Phone call (Please provide number(s) below)
- ☐ Other: _____

If you indicated 'E-mail' or 'Phone call' above, please provide contact information:

Telephone 1:	
Telephone 2:	
Email Address:	

1. Approximately how long have you lived at this location? _____ years _____ months

2. Do you: ☐ Rent your home ☐ Own your home
☐ Other (e.g. live rent free, own the building but do not reside on-site)
If Other, describe: _____

3. How many people live in this household (including you)? _____

4. What is the racial and ethnic makeup of your household? (Select all that apply)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaskan Native | <input type="checkbox"/> White or Caucasian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black or African American | <input type="checkbox"/> Some Other Race |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | <input type="checkbox"/> Two or More Races |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Middle Eastern or North African | <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic or Latino |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer Not to Answer |

Project ID; Roadway Name

County

5. What is the most relied upon mode of transportation in your household to necessary destinations such as school, work, healthcare services, grocery stores, etc.? (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Walk ☐ Bicycle ☐ Public Transit (i.e. Bus or Tram)
- ☐ Carpool or vanpool ☐ Car/Truck/Motorcycle ☐ Other _____
- ☐ Paratransit ☐ Rideshare service (i.e. Taxi, Lyft, Uber, etc.)

6. How many automobiles for personal use does your household operate?

- ☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 or more

7. Please identify any of the following that characterize your household:

- ☐ DISABLED (a person that has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities)

How many disabled people in the household? _____

- ☐ ELDERLY (Over 65)

How many elderly people in the household? _____

- ☐ LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (English is not your first language and you are still learning)

How many people in the household have limited English proficiency? _____

8. Which language is primarily used in your household? _____

9. What is the estimated, combined annual household income from all sources (before taxes)?

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$10,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$10,000 to \$14,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$15,000 to \$24,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25,000 to \$49,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$50,000 to \$99,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100,000 to \$149,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$150,000 - \$199,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$200,000 or more | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer Not to Answer |

Project ID; Roadway Name	County

10. The following information will help us to understand your circumstances and identify your need for additional information that you may find useful. You may use the spaces below or attach additional pages as necessary.

a. Please identify any benefits or improvements in your life that you may experience as a result of the project.

[illegible]

b. Please identify any difficulties, hardships, problems or concerns that you may have as a result of the project, including if you may be relocated by the project.

[illegible]

c. Do you have concerns or suggestions related to transportation in your area (driving, bicycling, walking, using transit, or other)?

[illegible]