



Wage and Hour Division's Compliance Strategies Evaluation

SUMMARY

The mission of the Department of Labor's (DOL) [Wage and Hour Division](#) (WHD) is to promote and achieve compliance with labor standards to protect and enhance the welfare of the nation's workforce. To help achieve this mission, WHD implements strategies to protect the workforce and assist employers with compliance. Data and research inform WHD's compliance strategies and help the agency monitor and evaluate how effectively it uses those strategies.

As part of this effort, DOL's Chief Evaluation Office (CEO), in partnership with WHD, contracted with Mathematica to conduct the Wage and Hour Division's Compliance Strategies Evaluation to gather evidence on effective methods WHD might use to design impact evaluation studies of its compliance strategies. This study does not assess WHD's capabilities or data system themselves but focuses on potential opportunities to evaluate compliance strategies.

The project contains four products:

The Compliance Strategies Evaluation Literature and Database Review provides a synthesis of existing literature and data related to WHD compliance strategies. The review summarizes what is currently known about effective compliance assistance strategies and suggests further research that can address gaps observed in the literature.

Exploring External Data to Enhance Monitoring and Evaluation of WHD's Compliance Strategies describes opportunities and limitations of WHD's internal case management system, the Wage and Hour Investigative Support and Reporting Database (WHISARD), and a selection of external data sources for evaluation. The study team explored how external data can be integrated with WHISARD data, and the limitations of doing so.

WHD Compliance Strategies: Directions for Future Research highlights effective practices for building and using evidence. The study team poses a broad theoretical framework for using monitoring and evaluation to build evidence, which would allow WHD to build upon its current practices. The study team also identifies potential obstacles and solutions that can assist in implementing monitoring and evaluation strategies.





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Behavioral Interventions for Compliance Assistance: Design Report provides intervention and evaluation designs for two behavioral intervention (BI) trials that, if implemented, would test whether webinar registrations increase when behavioral strategies are applied to emails targeting a given industry. The study team reviewed behavioral science literature, engaged in discussions with national and regional WHD staff about compliance assistance tools, and reviewed existing communications to identify opportunities to strengthen results. Information from these activities was used to identify procedural roadblocks where individual behaviors are potentially acting as roadblocks. The study team developed BI strategies to address these bottlenecks, as well as research designs that would evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies and generate high quality evidence.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **The Compliance Strategies Evaluation Literature and Database Review** findings suggest that there are five gaps in evidence on the effectiveness of compliance strategies that should be addressed by further research, one of which is research on the effectiveness of behavioral interventions in increasing compliance among employers.
- **The Exploring External Data to Enhance Monitoring and Evaluation of WHD's Compliance Strategies** found that low match rates limit the integration of WHISARD data and external datasets. The population of establishments covered in the WHISARD differ from those covered in external datasets, limiting the comparability of samples drawn from different sources.
- **The WHD Compliance Strategies: Directions for Future Research** report poses a monitoring and evaluation framework defined by five factors: documented and supported core activities; measurable outcomes; available, appropriate data; implementation maturity; internal validity. Considerations within each factor are described that are essential to the development of a strong monitoring and evaluation process. These considerations are presented as potential opportunities and potential challenges.
- **The Behavioral Interventions for Compliance Assistance: Design Report** findings suggest behavioral roadblocks may be preventing employers from ultimately attending WHD webinars. Engagement drop-off ranges from the





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employer not noticing or opening emails about the webinar to the employer
forgetting to attend the webinar after they have registered.

[SEE THE FULL STUDY](#)

STUDY TIMEFRAME: 2017 – 2020
SUBMITTED BY: Mathematica
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PARTNER AGENCY: Wage and Hour Division
SPONSOR: Chief Evaluation Office
CONTACT: ChiefEvaluationOffice@dol.gov

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