

COLLECTION IN THE TIME OF CORONA

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Producing the CPI Under Lockdown
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U.S. CPI: AGGREGATION STAGES

STAGE 1

- Aggregate sampled items into component indexes
- 243 item x 32 area = 7,776
- 176 sampled x 75 cities = **13,200 for data collection**
- **Urban population only**
- Hybrid use of Laspeyres and Geomean formula

STAGE 2

- Aggregate elementary indexes into products
- **Lowé** formula used for **CPI-U, CPI-W, R-CPI-E**
- **Tornqvist** formula used for **Chained CPI-U** (but published with ~one year lag)



U.S. CPI: DATA SOURCES

Housing Survey



- ~5,900 rents /mo (~78 per city /mo)
- Sample in each city rotated every 6 years
- Each unit priced once ever 6 months

Commodities & Services Pricing Survey

- ~90,000 quotes /mo (~1,200 per city /mo)
- ~Quotes priced monthly or bimonthly
- Continuous sample rotation (one every 4 years for each item-city)

Consumer Expenditure Survey



- CAPI, ~25,000 /year
- Diary, ~12,000 /year
- Continuous, monthly collection
- Households interviewed quarterly for one year

- Source of outlet frame
- Source of item sampling weights



BLS: Office of Field Operations

Consumer Price Index

Two surveys

- Housing
- Commodities and Services (C&S)

Headquarters in
Washington, DC

6
Regional
Offices

80
Full Time
Economists

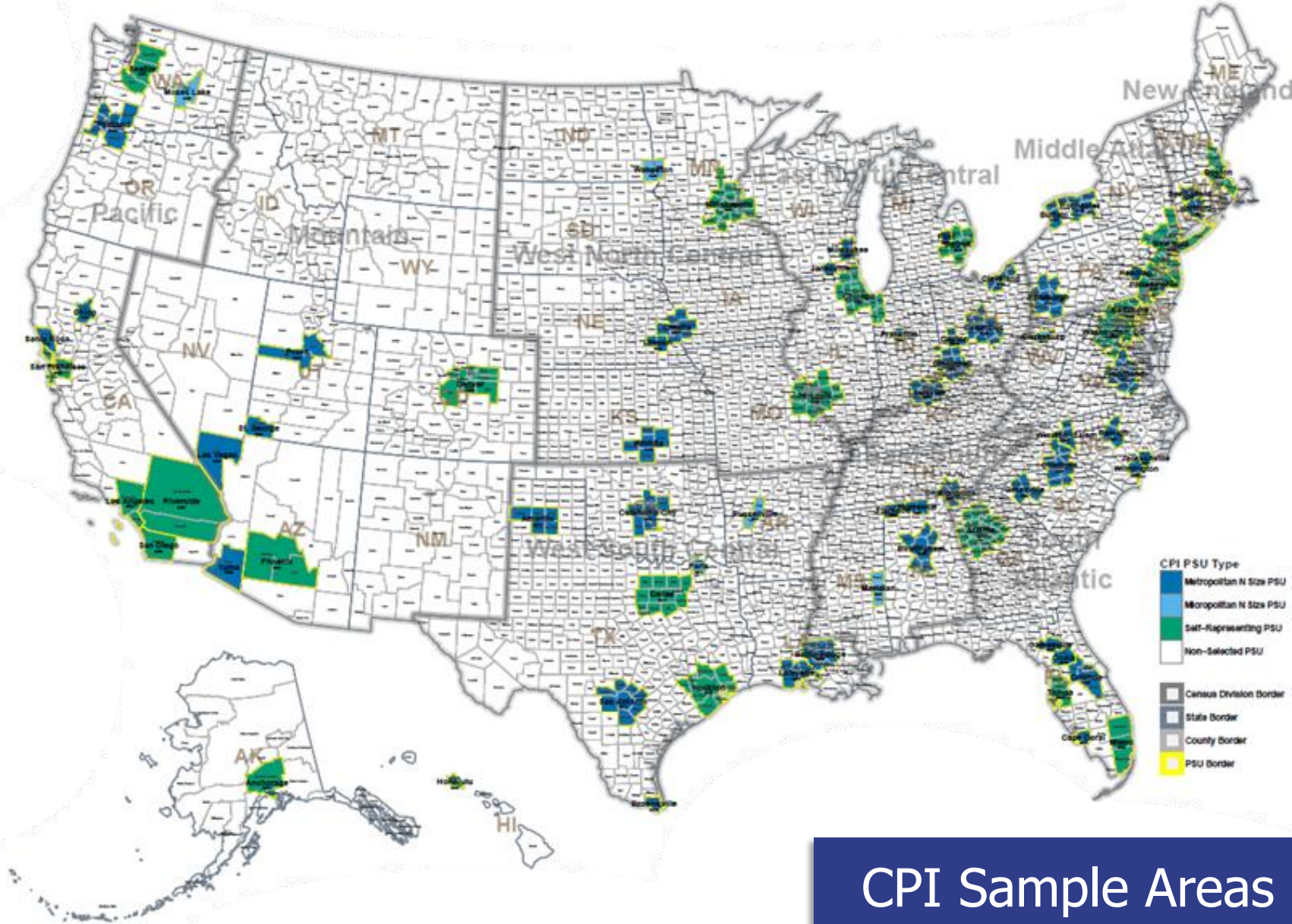
420
Economic
Assistants

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Equipment Used for Data Collection

- Surface Pro
- iPhone



CPI Sample Areas

CPI DATA COLLECTION

Conducted Coronavirus Pandemic Tabletop Exercise to assess BLS's readiness



Ceased all personal-visit data collection on March 16th



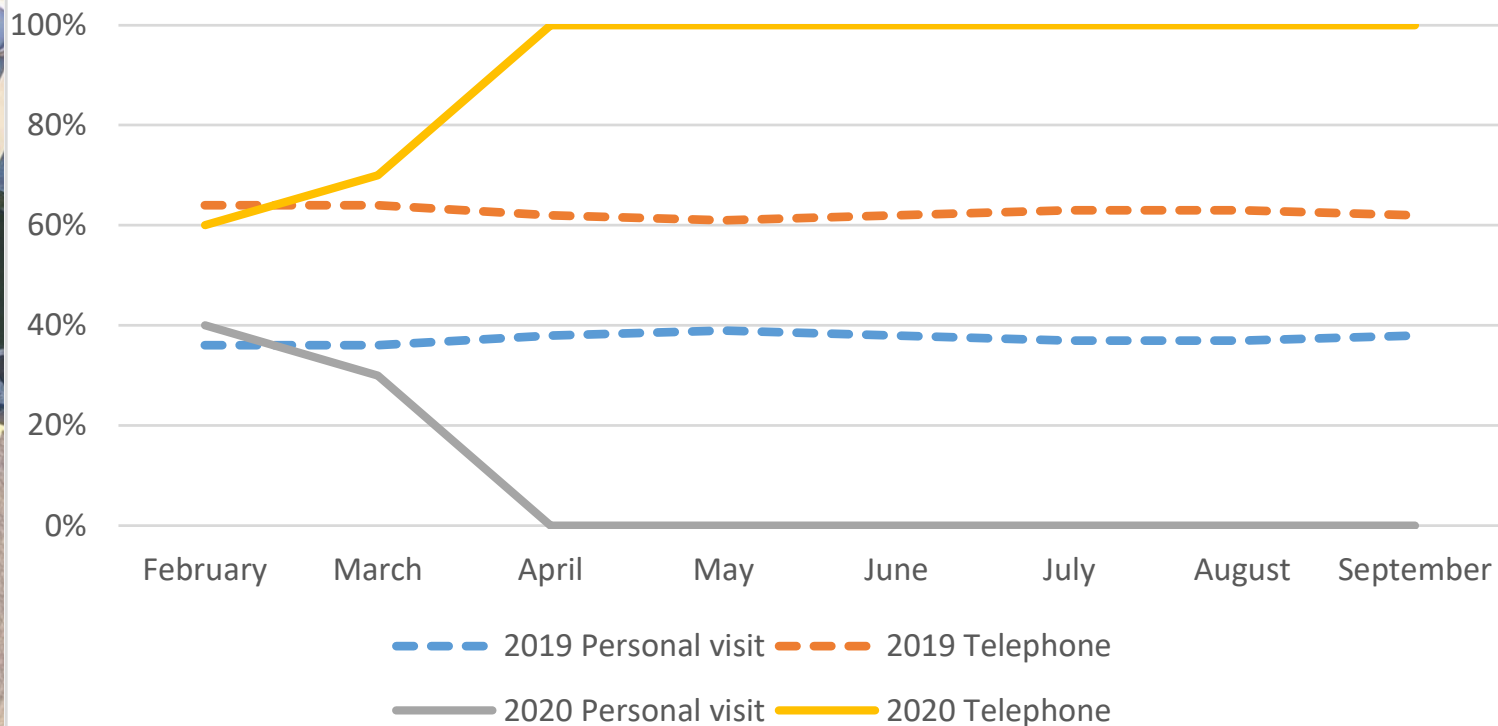
Maximized use of telephone and internet



Developed modified data collection procedures

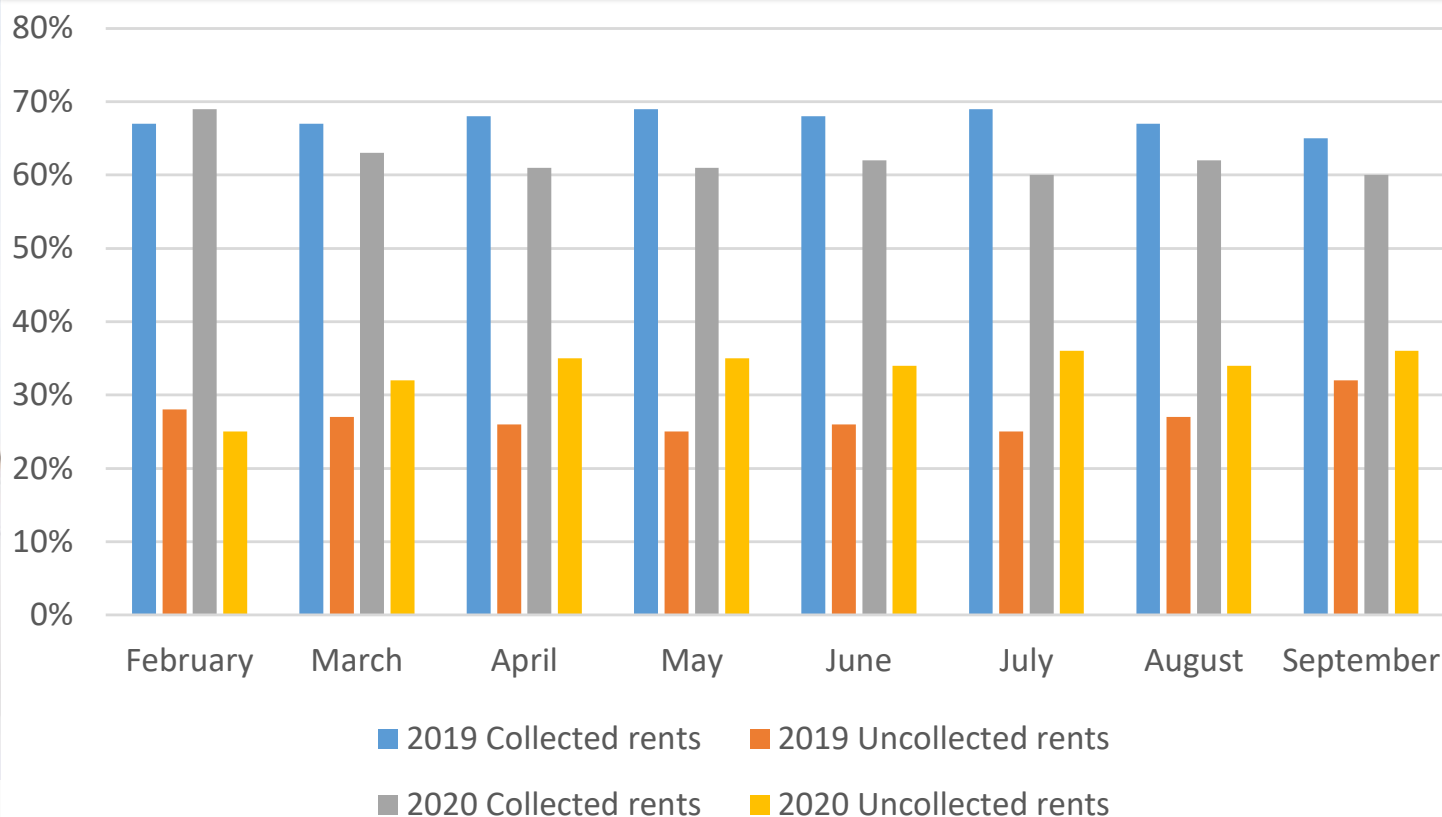
Housing Survey Data Collection

Collection Modes: Housing Survey



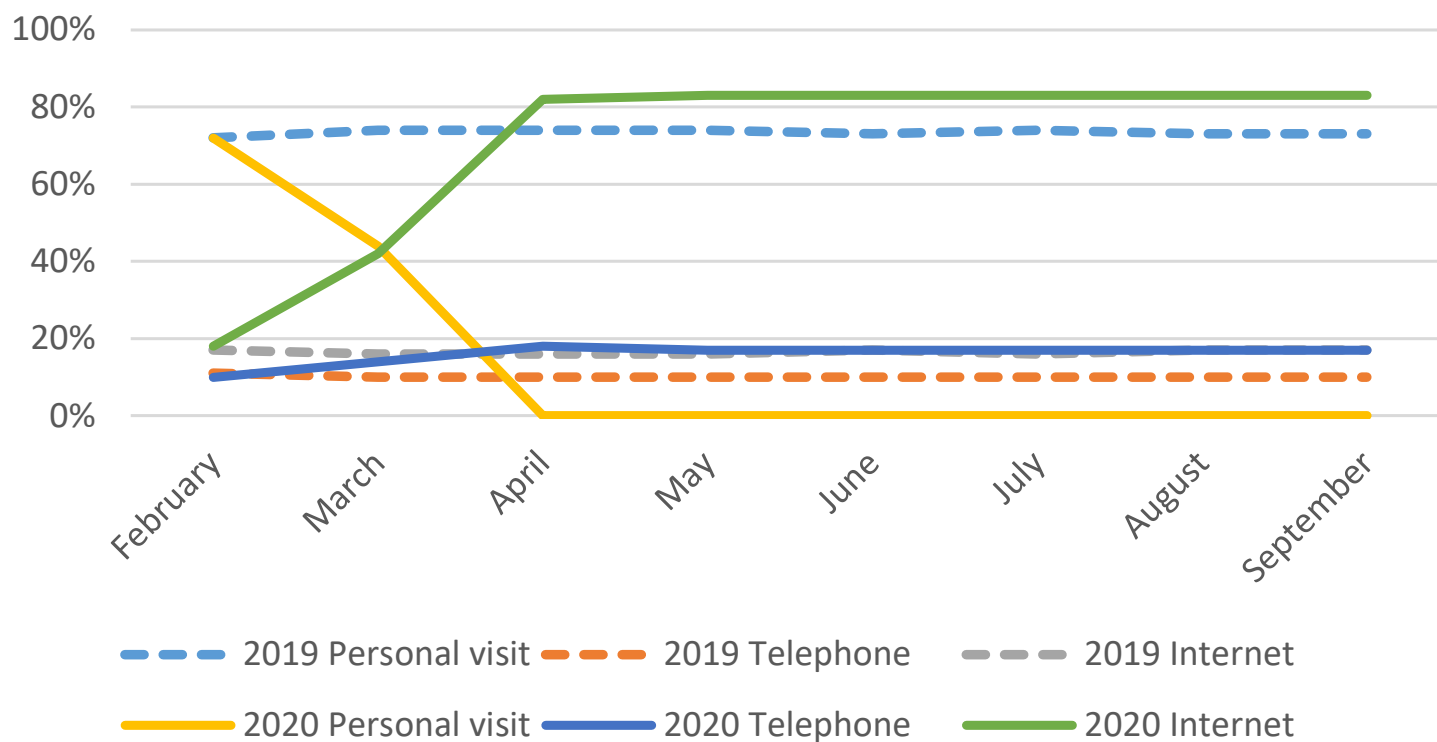
Housing Survey Data Collection

Response Rates: Housing Survey



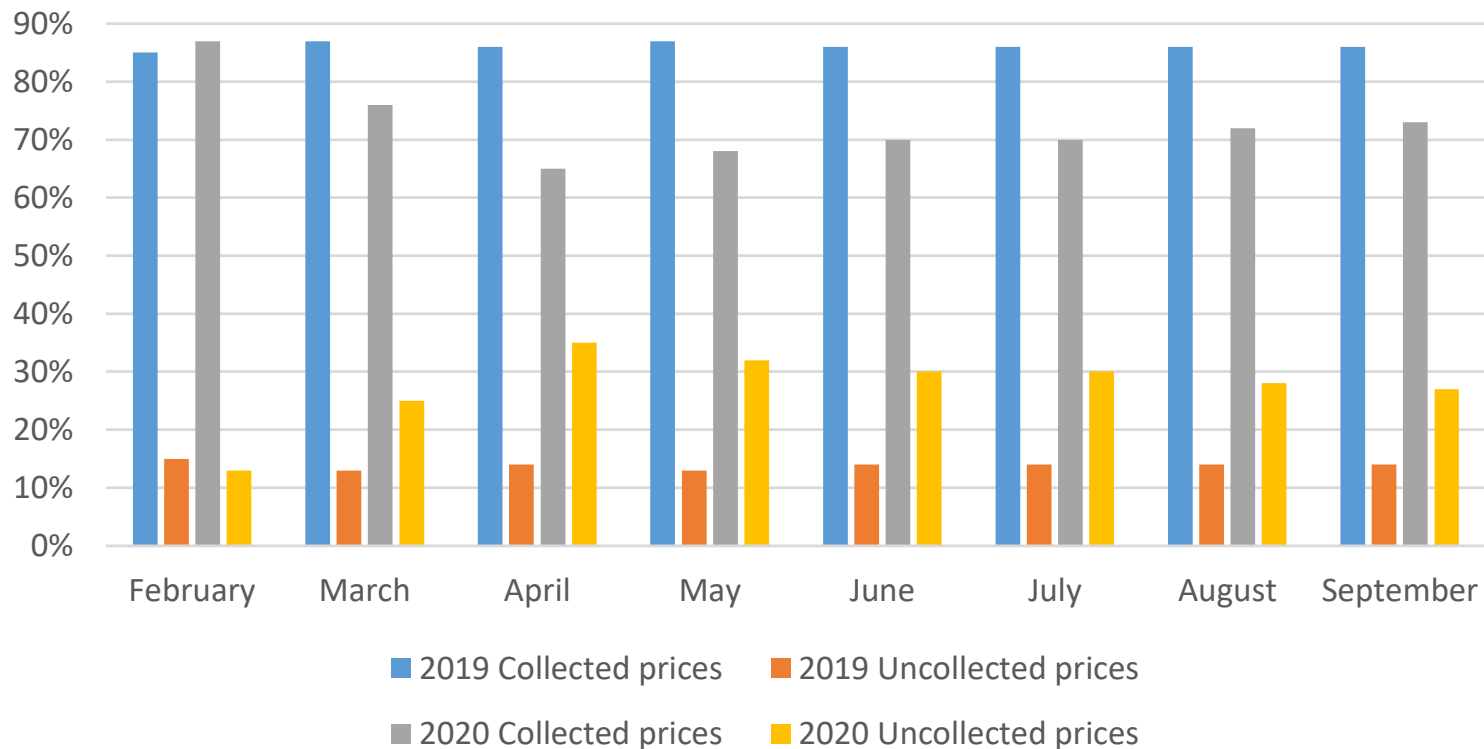
C&S Survey Data Collection

Collection Modes: C&S Survey



C&S Survey Data Collection

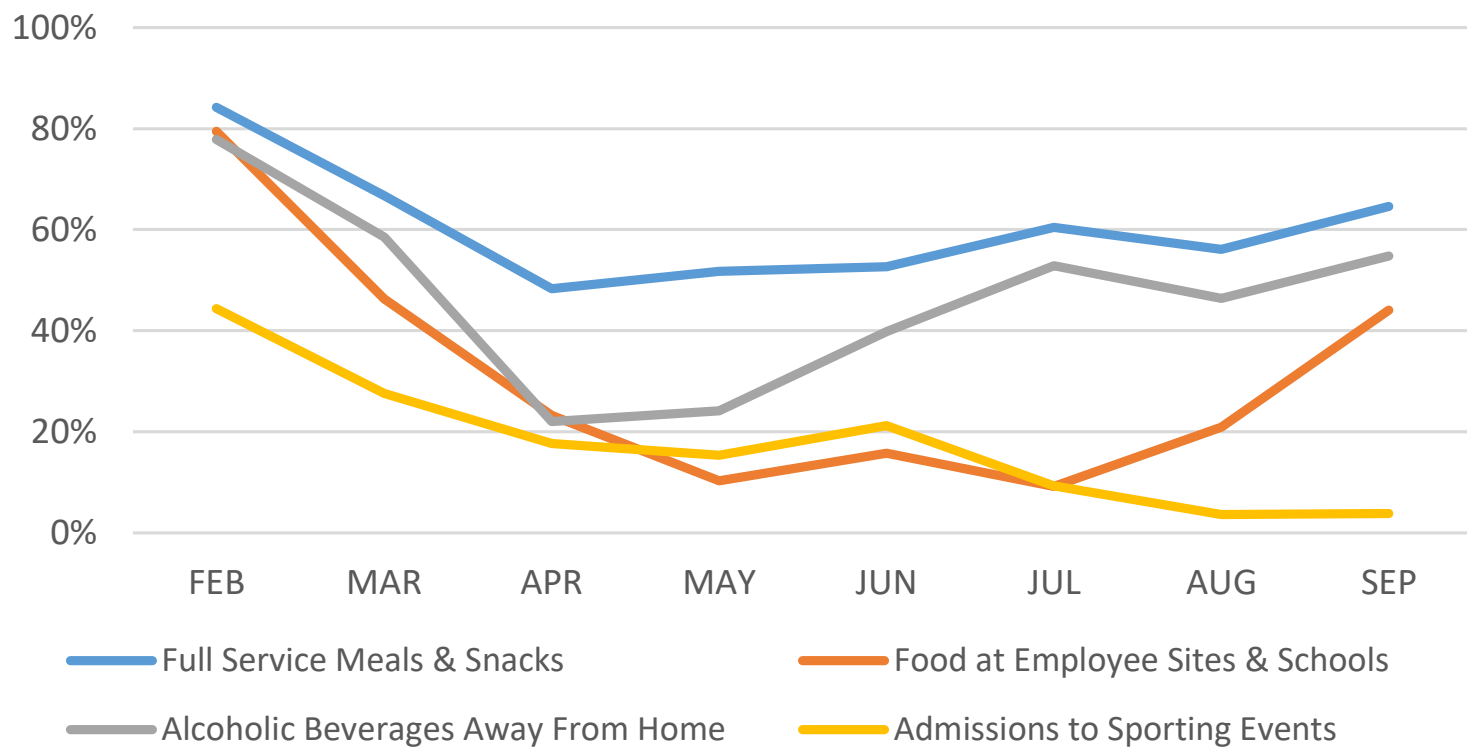
Response Rates: C&S Survey






C&S Survey Data Collection



Response Rates: Specific Item Categories



DATA QUALITY

-  Developed new productivity measures
-  Created a dashboard and ad hoc reports to monitor production
-  Instituted additional data quality activities to assess impact and compliance to new data collection procedures

POST-PANDEMIC

-  Status of states and localities
-  Assessment of the most efficient, effective and safest way to collect data
-  Respondents' willingness to engage and participate
-  Opportunity to establish more alternative data source arrangements

Contact Information

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