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# Completer Follow-Up Survey Guide

**2021 Follow-Up of the**

**2020 CTE Graduates**

**May 2021**

Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Education

Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education

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## Survey Summary

### What is the CTE Student Follow-up Survey?

Federal reporting guidelines of the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) call for a follow-up survey of all Career and Technical Education (CTE) completers 9-12 months after graduation. The definition of a **CTE completer** is a student who has met the requirements for a career and technical concentration and all requirements for high school graduation, or an approved alternative education program. The survey measures completer transition to further education or employment and satisfaction with the preparation received in the high school CTE program. Achieving a **75 percent response rate** or higher will improve the usefulness of the data; therefore, it is important to aim for the highest response rate you can achieve.

### Who is surveyed?

The Virginia Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education, provides each school division an electronic list of CTE completers to be surveyed. All students listed in the 2019-2020 Final Completer Demographics Report (CDR) will need to be surveyed. Each school division signed a 2019-2020 Completer Demographic Verification Report stating the accuracy of the completer counts. As a result, anyone listed as a completer on the CDR will be used to calculate the school division and school response rates. NOTE: VDOE approval is needed for any changes to the CDR.

### Conducting the Survey in 2021 of 2020 Completers

The Completer Follow-Up Survey takes less than 10 minutes to complete. Survey responses are entered online at [Link: ctefollowup.cooper.virginia.edu](https://ctefollowup.cooper.virginia.edu/)

The Center for Survey Research of the University of Virginia’s Weldon Cooper Center will manage the completer survey website. Technical questions should be directed to the Center of Survey Research at [CTEcompleters@virginia.edu](mailto:CTEcompleters@virginia.edu) or by telephone at  
(434) 243-5232.

### Deadline

The deadline for completing the follow-up survey is **September20, 2021**.

## Website for the Completer Survey

The 2021 CTE Follow-up Survey website for the 2020 CTE graduates is located at [Link: ctefollowup.cooper.virginia.edu](https://ctefollowup.cooper.virginia.edu/).

Use this website to:

1. Enter completer survey data
2. Edit previously completed surveys to correct errors
3. Monitor the response rate by division and school
4. Identify non-respondents for additional follow-up efforts
5. Access summaries of responses from this year and previous years’ surveys (division-level users only)
6. Store notes about unsuccessful contact attempts to guide additional attempts

### Login and Security

The survey is hosted on a secure website.

As in previous years, login and password information for division and school personnel will be disseminated to the lead CTE administrators via the Virginia Department of Education’s Single Sign-on for Web Systems (SSWS) Dropbox. **Please download the files as soon as you receive the email reminder in your inbox. Dropbox will delete the files after 6 days.**

Each division will receive ten user IDs and passwords for division-level access and five user IDs and passwords per school for school-level access to each school in the division. Division-level access allows users to see all completers across all schools within a division, while school-level access will allow users to only see completers within a particular school. Please contact Sean Johnson, Follow-Up Coordinator, at the Center for Survey Research of the Weldon Cooper Center if you require additional division- and school-level user IDs and password.

Divisions who wish to contact graduates and ask them to enter their own follow-up survey information should also contact the Center for Survey Research of the Weldon Cooper Center for a mailing list and student login information.

### How to Conduct the Survey

1. School divisions survey each student from the electronic list of CTE Completers by phone or mail.
2. Survey responses are entered into an online survey form located at [Link: ctefollowup.cooper.virginia.edu](https://ctefollowup.cooper.virginia.edu/) by school and division personnel or student respondents themselves, as applicable.
3. Do not fill out a survey for non-completers.
4. CTE completers who graduated but are now deceased or incarcerated and could not be contacted should be reported on the administrative screen by marking “Deceased,” “Incarcerated,” or “Other” under the Non-Response Reason. These CTE graduates will be counted in the denominator when calculating the division and school response rates.

## Conducting the Survey by Phone

1. **Log in to the CTE Follow-up website.**
2. **Identify completers to be interviewed.** Completers will be listed in a table along with their completion status. You can filter the list to display only students with a completion status of “No.” To do this, select “No” in the “Complete” window under “Search Students” and hit the “Apply” button. To fill out a completer’s survey, click the student’s name in the row in which he or she is listed. The phone number and prior contact record for that student will appear. Once a completer’s questionnaire has been submitted, the student’s questionnaire completion status will be changed from “No” to “Yes.”
3. **Contact the completer and conduct the interview.** Interviewers may enter information online while they are on the phone with the former student. Conducting the survey this way will reduce time and cost.
4. **Use the following script to begin the interview:**

“Hello, may I please speak with [name]?

Hello, I am [first name] with [insert division name] public schools and am calling because you completed a Career and Technical Education program while enrolled at [school name]. I have a few questions about your experiences that will help us evaluate our programs. Your answers will be completely confidential and will be used in a report to Congress in order to help us continue to fund these programs.

Do you have 10 minutes to give us your feedback?”

If “No”:

“I’m sorry, is there another time that would be better for you?” (If “No” here – do not push to continue the interview.) “Thank you.”

If “Yes”:

“Great! Let’s begin the interview.” Then read the survey questions as they appear on the computer screen.

Please note that if a respondent replies that he or she is not on active duty in the U.S. Armed Services, not employed full-time, and not employed part-time, it is very important that he or she provides a response to Question 7: “Are you actively seeking current employment?” A respondent’s response to this question helps to determine whether he or she is unemployed or out of the labor force.

After the interview is completed:

“Thank you so much for your time. Your answers will help us continue and improve upon our CTE programs.”

1. **Complete all telephone interviews and data entry by September 20, 2021.**

## Contacting CTE Completers by Email or Mail

Some school divisions begin the survey process by contacting each completer by email, and giving them a password by which they can take the survey online. The Completer Demographic Report does not have email addresses for completers, but school divisions may use their own email lists to prompt former students to fill out a survey online. Contact the Center for Survey Research of the University of Virginia’s Weldon Cooper Center at [CTEcompleters@virginia.edu](mailto:CTEcompleters@virginia.edu) or by telephone at (434) 243-5232 if you choose this option. An Excel file will be provided with student identification numbers/passwords.

School divisions that wish to contact former students by mail in order to give them a password by which they can fill out a survey online should contact the Center for Survey Research of the University of Virginia’s Weldon Cooper Center at [CTEcompleters@virginia.edu](mailto:CTEcompleters@virginia.edu) or by telephone at (434) 243-5232. An Excel file will be provided with address information and student identification numbers/passwords.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### In the phone interview, do I need to talk directly to the completer to conduct the survey?

It is necessary that interviewers talk directly to the completers in order to receive the most accurate information possible about their education, work status, and satisfaction. Third parties will not be able to provide reliable information on whether former students were satisfied with their CTE program or on other topics in the survey.

### How should I handle difficult phone calls?

* Remember that the work you are doing is important for improving your school’s CTE programs.
* Start by explaining that you are calling from the school to follow-up with the former student for purposes of program improvement.
* Express understanding if an individual does not wish to answer questions.
* Respond to complaints by assuring the respondent that you will note their concerns; make sure to do so.

### How should I handle refusals?

* Explain the purpose of the survey.
* Explain that their responses will help improve the high school’s program and that the school is interested in the experiences of all students who completed the CTE program.
* Do not push the former students to answer questions if they don’t want to respond.
* Thank them for their time, even if they refuse to participate.

## Best Practices

* **Fill out survey questions online while interviewing former students.** Save resources by not printing copies of the questionnaire. This is the most efficient method for conducting the survey and requires half the time versus filling out paper questionnaires on the phone and entering the data later on.
* **Avoid having teachers interview their former students.** Although sometimes unavoidable, having a CTE teacher interview one of their former students can create interviewer bias in the survey and skew results.
* **Be courteous and friendly when interviewing former students.** Not everyone will want to answer questions. Please respect this choice and move onto other graduates.
* **Don’t wait until the last minute to conduct the survey.** Achieving a 75 percent response rate can sometimes be challenging. It is best to start interviewing the CTE program completers as early as possible. This gives time for multiple contact attempts using multiple modes or channels of communication, which is a proven way to increase survey response rates.

## Contact Information

### Technical Assistance

If you have questions about the website or survey process, please contact The Center for Survey Research of the University of Virginia’s Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service at [CTEcompleters@virginia.edu](mailto://CTEcompleters@virginia.edu) or by telephone at (434) 243-5232.

### Reporting Requirements

Questions regarding current CTE accountability policies or specific completer follow-up reporting requirements, (i.e., completer incorrectly assigned to a school or school division), should be directed to the Virginia Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education at [CTE@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:CTE@doe.virginia.gov) or by telephone at  
(804) 225-2052.