

**Center for Digital Government’s 2021 Digital Counties Survey Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**   
  
The FAQs are organized by:   
I. General FAQs regarding survey materials   
II. Survey Questions FAQs  
III. Instructions for the Online Survey Tool and Tips  
  
*This document was finalized 2-10-21; anything added will show the date it was added.*  
  
**I) General FAQs:**  
**When is the survey submission due?** The **extended submission due date is Friday, April 2, 2021**   
  
**Where is the survey located?**  
**2021 Digital Counties Survey (DCOS) online** – [www.govtech.com/cdg/digitalcounties21](http://www.govtech.com/cdg/digitalcounties21)   
**2021 Digital Counties Word copy** (to compose and back up your response): [DOWNLOAD COPY OF SURVEY HERE (in Word)](https://erepublic.my.salesforce.com/sfc/p/300000008tFy/a/5Y000000CWXE/ZqPhF62W9twgMnclNdiE70SqNK61fZdMwDtkGnevv34)   
  
**What if we have questions that are not covered in the instructions and FAQs below?**  
**Survey “office hours”** will be held every Friday 9:30-10am PT; 12:30-1pm ETwhile the survey is open starting Feb. 19, at the following Zoom link: <https://www.zoomgov.com/my/surveys?pwd=Smg0TW1na0kwckZOa0U1cG1IU0V6UT09>

Teri Takai, Phil Bertolini and/or Janet Grenslitt will be available to talk about any questions that you may have on your survey responses or the survey input process. If you would like to invite others, the same link can be used to access the meeting.

**Webinar 2021 Digital Counties Survey Overview & Tips Feb. 11**  
Recorded webinar link: <https://cms.erepublic.com/common/forms/ajax_form/135821>

**How can I get a copy of the county’s 2020 response?**  
Send an email request to Janet Grenslitt, Director of Surveys and Awards at [jgrenslitt@erepublic.com](mailto:jgrenslitt@erepublic.com).

# II) Survey Questions – FAQs

**How is the 2021 survey different from the 2020 survey?**We added an Overview section with a Summary/Big Picture Question and a strategic plan request at the beginning; and removed the Sustainability questions as a separate category, inserting the key items into other survey questions. Changes were based on participant feedback.

**Could you summarize the word count requirements?**  
Every narrative question is allowed a 300-word response, except for the Summary/Big Picture response which is allowed 500 words.  
Each URL that has no spaces in it, counts as one (1) word (same as in MS Word).  
  
**Is there a place in the survey to discuss context?**   
There are “Optional/for Clarification” questions in each section, and an entire Demographics section at the survey’s end to fill in for context.   
  
**What is included in “measurable concrete impacts”?**  
The survey evaluates your county’s progress in key areas. A response with quantified metrics helps demonstrate your progress. Tuning up your key performance measures will help when preparing responses, for example, how much a project saved, benefits derived, efficiency measures, data center power usage effectiveness (PUE), number of online services, adoption rates, and more.

**For the survey matrices with four columns of status/use:** what if we have items that are In Use/Mature and that we also plan to upgrade in 12-18 months – which column should we select?

Answer: please select the last column “In Use: Upgrade in 12-18 mo.” and you can note the maturity level in the Optional narrative response at the end of each category.

**(Feb. 25) – May we simply create a page/sheet with all the narrative question URLs, screenshots, etc. and use that single link for all the questions?**

Yes, with some stipulations: 1. You should note the exact question number and URL on the reference page so it’s clear for the judges. 2. Do not use the listing to add words to the narrative (over the 300-word limit). 2. Enter the reference URL in each question in the survey online, so the judges won’t miss it, or need to continually look for it.

**III) Instructions for the Online System and Tips/Suggestions**  
  
**Survey System Requirements** <https://help.alchemer.com/help/alchemer-system-requirements> (The survey tool/platform has not changed, it was formerly named Survey Gizmo and is now Alchemer.)  
Recommended Browsers:   
Google Chrome  
Mozilla Firefox   
Internet Explorer V. 10 or higher  
Mobile Devices – Safari or Android. However, CDG does not recommend input using cell phones since some of the question types are unwieldy with a small screen.  
  
**Navigation by Table of Contents:**

**When you first access the survey, fill in the main survey respondent contact info (required) and click on the “Save and Continue” button** at the end/bottom of that page.  
  
**The survey gives you the ability to save and continue later. At the end of the Table of Contents page, a “Save and continue later” bar will pop up** at the bottom of the screen. **Enter your email and click "Save".** Your unique link to the survey will be sent to you (check your junk mail in case) and can be used to return and open your survey link later, from the same or another device and browser. It will contain saved answers from your previous session (you may need to refresh to see them).

Once you send yourself your survey link (using the “Save and Continue Later” bar), use that link to go back to your survey after you close your browser. Keep it handy also for AFTER submission if you need to edit something – just email Janet at jgrenslitt@erepublic.com to reopen your link.

Clicking on “Save and Continue” or the “Back” button at the end of each page returns you to the Table of Contents. Click on “Answer” under each category to take you to that category’s page.

Use the "Finalize" page to get a PDF of your answers that you have entered, and before the final submission.

**Back button**: Use the back button at the end/bottom of each page to navigate back to the Table of Contents. **DO NOT USE your BROWSER’s back arrow.**

The Center for Digital Government strongly recommends that you and your team use the Word document copy/template to compose and save your responses as a back-up to the online submission.

**Survey Content and Formatting:**

**Fill in every question or enter “N/A” for those narratives/text boxes you are not answering**. Each question must have an answer to show that category is complete. Please write clear, concise and plain language statements, and spell out or expand acronyms and initials on first use.   
  
You will see following the narrative questions a list of suggested items to answer. You do NOT have to answer all of these items; just the ones that apply to your answer.  
  
What you see in the textbox after input is how your submission will appear (bolding and embedded hyperlinks do not transfer for example).

Tables, graphs, screen shots, etc. will not transfer into the online form, so if you wish to present them for judging, post them on your website or other location that will generate a URL, and include that URL/web address in the online entry.

**Do not list addresses of, nor provide sensitive or protected data.**

**Tips and Suggestions**

* Utilize the survey process to gather information on accomplishments, benefits across the county
* Fill out all questions (use N/A where applicable)
* For narrative answers – be concise and specific
* Provide quantifiable benefits where possible – cost savings, cost avoidance, citizens served, increase in transactions processed, etc.
* Ensure consistency and avoid duplication across the entire survey – ensure one final edit before submission; use the Review and Finalize page to download a copy to review
* Also check that your reference URLs included in your submission are working

**Submission:**

**The online submission is the complete, official entry**. There is a **“Review, Finalize and Download”** survey page to visit when you have completed your answers. You can download a PDF of your submission from there to review before submitting the final version. (You can visit this page and download a PDF at any time.)

When your survey is complete, reviewed and finalized, go to the Review, Finalize and Download page and click on the “Yes” button, and your survey will be submitted. A confirmation email will be sent to you, which will include a PDF of your final submission.   
  
For assistance, contact Janet Grenslitt, Surveys and Awards Director at [jgrenslitt@erepublic.com](mailto:jgrenslitt@erepublic.com).