

1 **Reviewer #1:** Thank you for the insightful comments. We are encouraged you find our paper a significant contribution.

2 “many hyperparameters. . .” Our results hold even if the parameters  $i_{\max}, c, b$  are set above the values suggested, or if the

3 parameters  $\eta_0, C'$  are set below the values suggested in Theorem A.7. In the simulations, we found a fixed batch size of

4  $b = 64$  and a step size of  $\eta_t = \frac{\eta_0}{c+t}$  (without the resetting step) attains a marginal accuracy equal to that attained by the

5 Pólya-Gamma method specialized to logistic regression. In this case, there are just two hyperparameters ( $\eta_0, c$ ) to tune.

6 “ $f_t$  are not random variables” In some applications, one observes iid random variables and defines functions  $f_t$  based on

7 them, which are then iid random functions. For example, for logistic regression, an iid observation  $(u_t, y_t)$  leads to iid

8 random functions  $f_t(\theta) = -\log(1/(1 + e^{-y_t u_t^\top \theta}))$  (lines 179–186). However, our main results (Theorems 2.1 and 2.2)

9 do not require the  $f_t$ ’s to be iid random.

10 “specialized method already exists” The specialized method (Pólya-Gamma sampler) has running time at each epoch that

11 scales linearly with  $t$ , while our algorithm scales as  $\text{polylog}(t)$ . Moreover, it is unknown if it attains TV-error  $\varepsilon$  in time

12 polynomial in  $\frac{1}{\varepsilon}, t, d$ , and other problem parameters.

13 “authors could comment on other possible scenarios” We focused on logistic regression as it is one of the most common

14 applications. Our method also applies to other log-concave distributions (exponential, Laplace, Dirichlet, gamma, beta,

15 chi-squared, etc.). Another potential application is for online inference for Gaussian processes (for example, an online

16 version of [Filippone and Engler, ICML 2015]); we will add a discussion on this to the paper.

17 **Reviewer #2:** Thank you for the valuable feedback. We are encouraged you find our paper interesting and substantial.

18 “main motivation . . . estimate integrals” We agree that Bayesian inference is an important motivation of our work.

19 However, there are also interesting applications that make use of sampling but not integration, such as reinforcement

20 learning (via Thompson sampling), or online optimization. We describe these applications in lines 44–50 of our paper.

21 “Do you have a CLT for your chain?” We do not have a CLT for our chain, but believe it is possible to use our results to

22 prove a CLT. We would do this by modifying our Lemma A.3 to show that the samples generated by our algorithm stay

23 within a Euclidean ball of radius  $r > 0$  with probability roughly  $1 - e^{-r}$ , and then applying our bound for convergence

24 in TV distance. The rate would not be  $\sqrt{i}$  (we use  $i$  to represent the number of Markov chain steps). Although MALA

25 can attain a  $\sqrt{i}$  rate, it has the serious drawback in the online setting that the number of gradients to compute at each

26 step scales linearly with the number of component functions  $t$ , while our algorithm scales poly-logarithmically with  $t$ .

27 “experimental comparison. . .” At your suggestion, we performed initial experiments comparing the full Laplace approxi-

28 mation to SAGA-LD on online logistic regression, and found they attain marginal accuracy within 0.003 of each other.

29 We note that the full Laplace approximation currently requires optimizing a sum of  $t$  functions, which has runtime that

30 scales linearly with  $t$  at each epoch, while our method only scales as  $\text{polylog}(t)$ . It is an interesting open problem to

31 compute the Laplace approximation with runtime scaling as  $\text{polylog}(t)$ . In previous experiments, we found the marginal

32 accuracy for our SAGA-LD algorithm to be 0.921, for *online* Laplace to be 0.571, and for SGLD to be 0.442 (Figure 1

33 in the appendix). As part of our reorganization, we will include a section on experiments in the main body of the paper.

34 “genuinely interested in the results. . . massive block of text” We are very sorry we caused you discomfort in reading the

35 paper. We will ensure the final version is self-contained and friendly to the reader. Specifically, we will (1) move the

36 offline sampling results (Section 2.3) to the appendix, (2) streamline the related work section, (3) shorten the proof

37 overview, and (4) use the freed-up space to include more examples and intuition, and give full statements of theorems.

38 “contribution seems both interesting and substantial, but I do not think NIPS is the right outlet.” We are glad that you

39 find the result interesting, and agree that the format of the paper should be improved for a NeurIPS audience. We will

40 do this using the steps above, and welcome any other suggestions you may have. We hope you will consider increasing

41 your score and supporting the paper.

42 **Reviewer #3:** Thank you for the helpful suggestions to improve the flow of the paper, and for the encouraging review.

43 “not clear why Section 2.3 exists” The offline sampling problem is well studied by the ML community. (See e.g.

44 [DRW+16, CFM+18] in our paper’s references.) We show our algorithm can succeed in this setting under weaker

45 conditions than in the literature, for a class of weakly convex log-densities under a cold start  $X_0$ . If the reviewers find it

46 less interesting than the online problem, we will move Section 2.3 to the appendix to better focus on the online problem.

47 “not clear why  $t$  should start from 1” We will explain that  $f_0$  can be thought of as a prior before stating Problem 1.1.

48 “title of Section 3 is misleading” We will change the title of Section 3 to “Algorithm for online sampling.”

49 “The paper should be reorganized to improve clarity. . .” We will reorganize the paper’s main body in the order you

50 suggested, shorten the proof overview (moving the more technical parts to the appendix), and make sure all terms are

51 explained before stating the main results. We hope you will consider increasing your score and supporting the paper.