



ACCREDITATION TIPS

Developing Annual Appraisals

This handout provides recommendations on the structure and content of an Annual Appraisal and includes strategies on incorporating the document in different applications within the agency.

Getting started on an Annual Appraisal

The intent of the required Annual Appraisal is to help ensure an agency stays on track for continuous improvement for each of its service delivery programs. When developing an Annual Appraisal, keep two primary goals in mind: *simplicity* and *functionality*.

This process can begin by asking the following questions:

- Who should write the appraisal?* Often, the program manager is the most appropriate person.
- What should be included?* Describe the purpose of the program and the various approaches and measurables used to achieve that purpose.
- How should it be written?* Use a systematic approach to evaluate the program, using quantitative measurables whenever possible.

Suggested basic outline for an Annual Appraisal

Heading

- Title of program being appraised
- Category/PI
- Program manager
- Year of appraisal (calendar or fiscal)

Program description

- Purpose
- Staffing
- Specific sub-programs within the program (such as car seat program within a CRR category program)

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Internal program training

- Training accomplished for members/staff during the appraisal period. Mandated federal/state/local requirements can be identified in this section.
- Training needed in the upcoming appraisal period.

Measures

- Inputs/outputs used

Self-assessment of the program

- The program's PI's can be used for the self-assessment.
- This is a prime opportunity to update the PI's from the previous year and can provide the accreditation manager the updates he/she will need to write the Annual Compliance Report (ACR).

Current and coming year goals and objectives

- List current goals and objectives of the program and progress made
- List obstacles that prevented reaching any of the goals and objectives (gap analysis)
- Discuss links to the agency's strategic plan and/or CRA-SOC
- List the upcoming year's goals and objectives and resources needed to meet them

The annual appraisal can be created in form-fillable fashion to ensure the structure of the document is consistent for each program appraisal.

Agency application of Annual Appraisals

The Annual Appraisal can be become much more than a required document for the accreditation process, it can become the bridging document between several agency processes that often exist in a silo-type environment - accreditation, budget, and the strategic plan. The annual program appraisals can serve as a link for each of these processes when the appraisals are used beyond the sole requirement for the program performance indicators.



The following are descriptions of how that can be accomplished, along with other applications and advantages of annual appraisals within the agency.

The Annual Appraisal...

- Supports the program's proposed budget for the new budget year by definitively identifying resources needed to accomplish the program's goals and objectives. Budget worksheets can be attached to the appraisal as part of the report narrative or as an addendum. The appraisal essentially becomes a justification document for the requested budget.
- Ensures that the program goals and objectives are in sync with the agency's strategic plan. Goals of the program can be linked to the agency's strategic initiatives or goals.
- Provides an opportunity for the program's PI's to be updated and included as evidence of a comprehensive annual self-assessment.
- Provides a resource to draw from for the development of an agency-wide annual report for governing board and public; this process makes it a much easier task for the annual report facilitator.
- Provides a daily operation playbook for the program manager – an annual appraisal that contains goals and objectives for the current year can be used as a guiding document for daily operations.
- Provides an annual performance summary for the supervisor of the program manager as well as the fire chief.

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- Process can be expanded to all areas of the agency beyond the requirements of accreditation, such logistics, training, HR, etc.