



Peer Assessment Program Technical Assistance Opportunity

Overview

An effective and efficient administrative infrastructure is critical for a public health agency to successfully deliver the 10 Essential Public Health Services and support the Foundational Areas in deftly responding to emerging public health issues. The Peer Assessment Program provides an opportunity for health agencies to undergo an assessment of their administrative and organizational capacity and identify opportunities for modernizing their agency's administrative infrastructure and operations to meet the needs and challenges of public health.

The program is structured to assess public health agencies against a set of evidence-informed indicators through a process facilitated by peers from across the country. By engaging a team of external peers as assessors, health agencies benefit from fresh perspectives, valuable insight, and an objective assessment, free from internal biases. Throughout the assessment process, the health department will connect with both internal and external partners to consider challenges and opportunities and recommend best practices or solutions for improving the agility of administrative process and policies. This is not a certification or accreditation program.

The core group of capacity indicators that define health agency administrative and organizational capacity are organized into ten (10) areas identified below. Each area has corresponding capacity indicators that are used by the health agency and peer reviewers to help assess and quantitatively define current administrative and organizational capacity.

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| 1. Human Resources Management | 7. Administrative Policy and Planning |
| 2. Workforce Development | 8. Communications |
| 3. Information System Management | 9. Performance Management/Quality Improvement and Evaluation |
| 4. Facilities Management | 10. Learning Organizational Efforts and Innovations |
| 5. Accounting, Budgeting and Audit | |
| 6. Procurement of Equipment, Supplies, and Services | |

Program Goals

- Improve agency understanding of administrative gaps and its ability to prioritize and focus resources to improve these areas.
- Build capacity to problem solve and think creatively to develop innovative solutions that improve administrative readiness.
- Enhance collaboration and working relationships within administrative units, across program areas, and with external partners.
- Strengthen public health agency infrastructure and improve performance.

Process and Activities

- The health agency completes an initial assessment and high-level Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis with agency leadership to prioritize 1-2 capacity areas for focus.
- The health agency collects data related to the priority areas of focus for the assessment and shares the information with ASTHO and the Peer Review Team.
- The Peer Review Team meets virtually with the health agency team up to three times to discuss health agency goals, build relationships, and discuss key staff and partners to be interviewed at the site visit.
- A Site Visit is held (up to 3 ½ days), during which time the Peer Review Team will meet with health agency staff, interview administrative teams, and key partners, and write up a report of assessment findings and recommendations.
- On the last day of the Site Visit, the Peer Review Team presents findings and recommendations to health agency staff and leaders. The health agency will also receive an electronic copy of the report.
- Following the Site Visit, the health agency can request assistance from ASTHO to develop an action plan and select priorities for change based on the recommendations provided in the final report. Included in this assistance, the health agency may also receive one year of quarterly coaching calls and technical assistance from expert consultants, the Senior Leader Reserve Corps, and ASTHO, on change management and implementation of the action plan.

How to Participate

- Jurisdictions and peer reviewers will apply to the ASTHO STAR Center Peer Assessment Program through an online application. The application will require a letter of support from the health official.
- The program activities and process are spread across approximately 4-5 months from application to completion of the process identified above.
- Participating agencies will need to identify a team to participate in the assessment and collect data on priority capacity areas, coordinate partner interviews, and logistics of a site visit.



If you have any questions about the program or being a peer reviewer, please email ASTHO staff at STARPeerAssessment@astho.org.

Visit the ASTHO STAR Center Peer Assessment Program webpage for program resources and the application by scanning the QR or visiting <https://tinyurl.com/ASTHO-Peer-Assessment>.