

# AmeriCorps Performance Measurement Information Session

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# What is Performance Measurement?

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**Performance measures** are measurable indicators of a program's performance as it relates to AmeriCorps Member service activities.

**Performance measurement** is the process of **systematically and regularly collecting and monitoring data** measuring the services provided by your program and the effect your program has in communities or in the lives of members or community beneficiaries.

# What is Performance Measurement?

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Performance measurement is related to the direction of observed **changes** in communities, participants (members), or end beneficiaries receiving your program's services.

In contrast to **evaluation**, it is NOT intended to establish a causal relationship between your program and a desired (or undesired) program outcome.

# What is Performance Measurement

Key Areas of Difference	Performance Measurement	Impact Evaluation
Causality	Assumes causality; does not “prove” theory of change.	Seeks to show causality and “prove” theory of change.
Implementation	Tracks outputs and outcomes on a regular, ongoing basis.	May occur from time to time, but not on a regular ongoing basis.
Time Focus	Shorter term focus; what can be measured within one year.	Longer term focus.
Design	Balances rigor with practicality; measurement implemented by program staff with limited resources and expertise.	Uses most rigorous evaluation design and methods that are right for program (e.g. quasi-experimental design).

# What is Performance Measurement

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It is important to note that Performance Measures are related to the **MEMBERS'** service—NOT your organization in general. You need to clearly articulate in the narrative and through these measures that because of these members (intervention) you have been able to do \_\_\_\_ (output and outcome).

Measures should capture the most significant activities of your AmeriCorps program.

## Why do we Measure Performance?

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The main purpose of performance measurement is to strengthen your AmeriCorps program, foster continuous improvement and to identify best practices and models that merit replication.

# Why do we Measure Performance?

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- **Accountability**
  - Stakeholders
  - OneStar and AmeriCorps the Agency
  - Congress
- **Measure Change:** Reliable information collected in a systematic way
- **Improve Programs**
  - Identify and correct problems
  - Strengthen the intervention
  - Determine where to allocate limited resources

## Successful Performance Measurement

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As you create your performance measures, consider the following division of duties:

- Are grant writers communicating with program staff as measures are created and entered-into the grant application?
- Is there an established process for data collection and review?
- Who is collecting the data and how will they be properly trained to ensure standard data collection methods across all sites?
- Is there an individual who performs an objective review of the data who is not someone collecting the data?

# Questions?

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# Performance Measure Requirements

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1. Utilize the AmeriCorps National Performance Measures.
2. Have at least one aligned Measure
  - Output paired with Outcome
  - There is ZERO competitive advantage for having more than one aligned measure.
  - Quality over Quantity!
3. Include measures that capture the PRIMARY service being performed by your AmeriCorps members.

# Performance Measure Requirements

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National Performance Measures are tied to  
**6 AmeriCorps Focus Areas**  
as well as Capacity Building.

Definitions for each focus area are from the  
AmeriCorps Strategic Plan. These  
definitions inform the Performance  
Measures.

# Performance Measure Requirements

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## AmeriCorps Focus Areas

- Disaster Services
- Economic Opportunity
- Education
- Environmental Stewardship
- Healthy Futures
- Veterans and Military Families

*Capacity Building related to the activities of the 6 Focus Areas.*

## Disaster Services

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- Grant activities will provide support to increase the **preparedness** of individuals for disasters, improve individuals' **readiness to respond** to disasters, help individuals **recover** from disasters, and/or help individuals mitigate disasters.
- Grantees also have the ability to respond to national disasters under AmeriCorps' cooperative agreements and FEMA mission assignments.

## Economic Opportunity

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Grants will provide support and/or facilitate access to services and resources that contribute to the **improved economic well-being** and **security** of economically disadvantaged people; help economically disadvantaged people to have improved access to services that enhance **financial literacy**; transition into or remain in safe, healthy, affordable **housing**; and/or have improved **employability** leading to increased success in becoming employed.

## Education

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Grants will provide support and/or facilitate access to services and resources that contribute to **improved educational outcomes** for economically disadvantaged children; **improved school readiness** for economically disadvantaged young children; improved **educational and behavioral outcomes** of students in low-achieving elementary, middle, and high schools; and/or support economically disadvantaged students **prepare for success in post-secondary** educational institutions.

## Environmental Stewardship

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- Grants will support **responsible stewardship of the environment**, while preparing communities for challenging circumstances and helping Americans **respond to and recover from disruptive life events**: programs that **conserve natural habitats; protect clean air and water; maintain public lands; support wildland fire mitigation**; cultivate individual and community self-sufficiency; provide **reforestation** services after floods or fires; and more.
- AmeriCorps programs support activities, such as conservation and fire corps, which may also help veterans and others learn new job skills through conservation service.

## Healthy Futures

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Grants will provide support for activities that will **address the opioid crisis**; increase seniors' ability to remain in their own homes with the same or improved quality of life for as long as possible; and/or increase physical activity and improve nutrition with the purpose of reducing obesity.

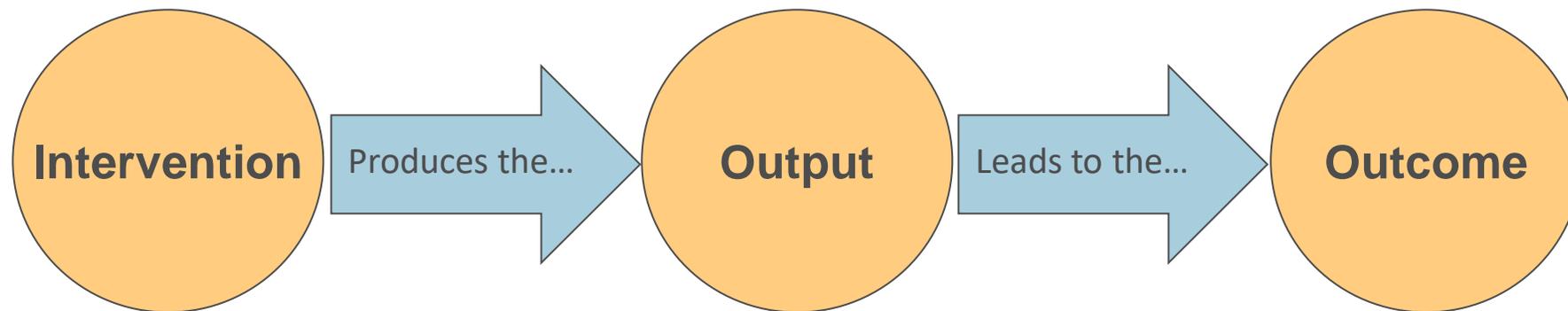
## Veterans and Military Families

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Grants will positively **impact the quality of life of veterans and improve military family strength**; increase the number of veterans, wounded warriors, military service members, and their families served by AmeriCorps-supported programs; and/or increase the number of veterans and military family members engaged in service through AmeriCorps-supported programs.

# Developing Performance Measures

Use your **Logic Model** when developing your **Performance Measures**.



The Output and Outcome should measure the same intervention and beneficiaries.

# Developing Performance Measures

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## Example #1

**Intervention:** Construction teams assess housing request, plan and execute housing upgrades and repairs and complete inspection requirements for individuals with disabilities.

**Output:** Individuals with disabilities receive housing service (upgrades and repairs) (O1A)

**Outcome:** Construction team members improve construction skills.

# Developing Performance Measures

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## Example #2

**Intervention:** Members meet one-on-one with 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students who are reading below grade level on a weekly basis for 10 months.

**Output:** Number of individuals served (ED1A)

**Outcome:** Number of students with improved academic performance (ED5A)

## Developing Performance Measures

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- In the application narrative, applicants should discuss their rationale for setting output and outcome targets
- Rationales and justifications should be informed by:
  - the organization's performance data (e.g., program data observed over time suggests targets are reasonable),
  - relevant research (e.g., targets documented by organizations running similar programs with similar populations), or
  - prior program evaluation findings

# Developing Performance Measures

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## Outcomes:

- Meaningful
- Ambitious yet realistic
- Reflect the change you want to measure

# Developing Performance Measures

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## Meaningful

- Is the outcome addressing the community need/problem?
- Is the outcome central or peripheral?
- Is the target audience (beneficiaries) identified in the outcome?
- How many will benefit?
- How much change will occur for the beneficiaries?
- Is the outcome supported by evidence for the intervention?

# Developing Performance Measures

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## Ambitious yet Realistic

- Program timeframe
- Scope of the intervention
- Severity of the problem being addressed
- Program resources

## Reflect the Change you want to Measure

- Attitude, knowledge, behavior, or condition
- Will inform the instrument you use

# Developing Performance Measures

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## Performance Measure Checklist

- This checklist is used to assess performance measures during the review process.
- Items on the checklist are common problems that require clarification.
- The checklist is not a comprehensive list of all performance measure items that may require clarification.

# Performance Measure Checklist

*Available starting on page 27 of the AmeriCorps Performance Measure Instructions*

## Appendix B: Performance Measures Checklist

This checklist is used to assess performance measures during the review process. Items on the checklist are common problems that require clarification. The checklist is not a comprehensive list of all performance measure items that may require clarification. Refer to the Performance Measure Instructions for full requirements.

**Note: In this version of the PM Instructions, items pertaining to specific performance measures have been moved to the Review Notes Section for those performance measures. Assess the following items for ALL performance measures unless otherwise noted:**

	<b>Alignment with Narrative/TOC</b>
1	Focus areas, objectives, interventions, outputs and outcomes are consistent with the application narrative, logic model, and theory of change.
	<b>Interventions</b>
2	The interventions selected contribute directly to the outputs and outcomes.
3	Interventions are not repeated in multiple aligned performance measures.
	<b>Dosage</b>
4	The dosage (frequency, intensity, duration of intervention) is described and is sufficient to achieve outcomes.

# Definitions

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## **Strategy** = Intervention

The strategy/intervention will be the same for all components of the measure – output, outcome – because all of these should result from the same intervention.

## **Result** = Output, Intermediate Outcome, End Outcome

**Indicator** = For outputs, a description of the number of beneficiaries to be counted.  
For outcomes, a description of the measurable change that will occur.

# Definitions

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## **Result Statement:**

Example: Students will demonstrate improved academic performance...

**Target Statement** = The indicator plus the expected number

Example: 100 beneficiaries will...

**Target** = The number in the target statement

Example: 100

# Definitions

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**Instrument** = The specific tool that will be used to collect your data

- Selected instruments must meet the specific CNCS criteria for that Performance measure
- Examples:
  - School attendance records (Education)
  - Surveys (Healthy Futures)
  - Number of homes restored or repaired (Disaster Services)

**Data Collection Methodology** = How data will be collected

- Examples: Survey, pre/post test

**\*\*Pay close attention to “Definition of Key Terms” and “How to Measure/Collect Data” in the CNCS Performance Measure Instructions**

## eGrants Application

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- Closely follow the Performance Measure instructions to clearly describe interventions, instruments, etc.
- The content of the Performance Measures section should stand alone from the rest of the application.

# Common Errors

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## ED5A: Number of students with improved academic performance

- Please clarify if students must improve in both reading and math in order to be counted, or if improvement in one of these subject areas is sufficient to be counted as improved.
- Please define the level of improvement necessary to be counted as improved and why this amount of gain is significant.
- Please describe the content of the pre/post assessment, what it measures, and why it was selected

## ED27C: Number of students with improved academic engagement or social and emotional skills

- Please specify which aspect of academic engagement you are measuring (increased interest in school, improved perspective on school climate, increased attachment to school or increased educational aspirations).
- Please describe the content of the pre/post survey and what it measures.
- The instrument description states that members will complete surveys. Only student surveys, teacher surveys, or school records are acceptable instruments for this performance measure. Since the selected instrument is a student survey, please confirm that students will be completing the survey and remove the language about members completing the survey from the performance measure. If members are administering the survey to students, please explain how the program will mitigate potential bias.

# Questions?

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# Resources

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- Tutorial for completing the Performance Measures screens in eGrants
  - <http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/performance-measurement/egrants-performance-measures-module-amicorps>
- AmeriCorps Performance Measures Framework
  - <http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/performance-measurement/amicorps>
- Other AmeriCorps Performance Measure Resources
  - <http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/performance-measurement/other-amicorps-performance-measurement-resources>
- CNCS National Service Hotline
  - <https://questions.nationalservice.gov/>

## Informational Sessions

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- **Creating the Application Informational Session**
  - Thursday, January 28, 2021 at 11:00am CST
- **AmeriCorps Open Forum Session**
  - Thursday, February 4, 2021 at 11:00am CST

Do not forget to submit the **REQUIRED** to submit a  
Notice of Intent to Apply Form

Form must be completed online and can be accessed  
here: <https://www.tfaforms.com/4850462>

Formula New/Recompete Applicants  
Due by **February 19, 2021**

# Questions?

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For Assistance After this Webinar

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**For questions about this opportunity, contact:**

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Phone consultation available by appointment only. Email Taylor to schedule.