



Performance Measurement Frequently Asked Questions

1. ***What are WSC Performance Measures?***

WSC has established Performance measures under all six CNCS Focus Areas: Disaster Services, Economic Opportunity, Education, Environmental Stewardship, Healthy Futures, and Veterans and Military Families based on the priorities included in the Serve America Act.

2. ***What is the difference between Priority Measures and Complementary Program Measures?***

The WSC Performance Measures are split into two groups: Priority Measures and Complementary Program Measures. Priority Measures are performance measures that are included within the WSC Grant to CNCS. Complementary Program Measures are additional measures that are important to WSC but not included in the WSC Grant.

3. ***What is an “applicant-determined” performance measure?***

An applicant-determined performance measure is one in which the applicant identifies the outputs and/or outcomes that will be measured, based on its intervention. This is different from the Performance Measures, where WSC pre-determines common outputs and outcomes with specific definitions and data collection methods that applicants must use.

4. ***If I select particular performance measures this year, will I maintain the same measures next year?***

Yes. Performance measures should be consistent over the life of a three-year grant so that progress can be measured over time.

5. ***What is an aligned performance measure?***

An aligned performance measure is an output paired with an outcome. The paired output-outcome measures may be WSC Performance Measures or an applicant-determined measure. The paired output-outcome track and measure the same unit.

6. ***What is an output-only performance measure?***

An output-only measure is a WSC Performance Measure output without an associated outcome(s). Applicants may select output-only measures if the output measures a significant program activity. These do not fulfill the requirement for an aligned performance measure, but may be selected in addition to the aligned measure(s).

7. ***How many performance measures should I propose?***

Each program must have at least one aligned measure (composed of an output and an outcome) reflecting its primary intervention. It is appropriate to have additional performance measures for other significant components of your program, but WSC values the quality of performance measures more than the quantity. Performance measures reflecting activities that are not central to your program model should not be included in your application and will not be reported to CNCS, although you might still collect the data for your own purposes.

8. *Do the AmeriCorps members in my program have to be directly providing the service counted in the performance measures?*

The performance measures selected by an AmeriCorps program should reflect the expected result of the AmeriCorps program activities. The AmeriCorps members do not have to interact directly with the beneficiaries of the service, but they must provide meaningful direct support that makes the program's results possible. For example, if a program's AmeriCorps members recruit and manage volunteers who deliver a particular intervention, the program may report the outputs and outcomes of that intervention under their performance measures.

9. *Can I count the same people more than once in one performance measure output or outcome if they receive service in more than one grant year?*

If the individual receives services in more than one grant year, they may be counted as having received services in the output measure for each of the grant years in which they receive services. They may only be counted in the outcome measure for each grant year if they meet the specified level of improvement for the outcome in each year. For example, a student receives tutoring in second and third grade. The program expects that students will improve their reading score by one grade level each year. If the student is served in both second and third grade and improves by one grade level in each year, the student may be counted in the output and outcome for both years. If the student improves by half a grade level in second grade and one grade level in third grade, the student may be counted in both years' outputs, but only in the outcome for the third grade year.

10. *Can two or more performance measure outputs have the same outcome?*

It depends on the program model. If the model represents a continuum of care/services where participating leads from one level of service to another, then it makes sense to create an aligned measure of multiple outputs that lead to a single outcome. If there are two completely different interventions that lead to the same outcome, those should be reported with each output/outcome as their own aligned measure.

11. *Can one performance measure have more than one outcome?*

Yes. There may be more than one desired outcome for a single output. Aligned measures should only be configured this way if it is expected that all of the individuals counted in the output will potentially achieve the outcome indicated. If the outcomes are resulting from different populations being served, there should be multiple outputs.

12. *Do all members have to serve on the exact same activities or can the activities differ slightly, if they are all working toward the same performance measure targets?*

As long as the activities in which the AmeriCorps members engage are consistent with your program's theory of change and align with the performance measure instructions for the performance measures you wish to use, the activities do not have to be exactly the same for all members.