

Agency Priority Goals (APGs) Best Practices and Success Factors

Overview

Agency Priority Goals (APGs) were created by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in Memorandum M-10-24 and later codified in statute by the GPRM Modernization Act of 2010 (GPRAMA). **APGs are specific, challenging goals that can be accomplished in a two-year period, and offer a high priority opportunity for improvement.** Agency leaders select a small handful of these goals, identify responsible officials, and review their progress on a quarterly basis. This effectively motivates agency staff to work harder and smarter to improve performance and ensures accountability for outcomes.

Setting APGs helps agencies communicate their impacts publicly, show responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars, and highlight the use of performance management to deliver results. **There are several principles for setting APGs that enable a greater chance for mission success.** No one principle is appropriate for every agency, so consider how the principles fit into your agency's unique culture, structure, and business practices.

Successful APGs have:

- ❑ **Leadership:** Senior leadership commitment and engagement
- ❑ **Clarity:** Well-designed, clearly articulated goal, measures, targets, and strategies
- ❑ **Ownership:** Agency and goal team ownership of the APG and validation from senior agency leaders, White House, and OMB
- ❑ **Routines:** Adherence to routines to provide consistent, continuous focus. Includes regular, in-person data-driven reviews chaired by the Agency Deputy Secretary
- ❑ **Data:** Use of data to assess progress, inform decision-making, and enable organizational learning

Consider APGs that:

- ❑ Encourage **work across organizational units** within an Agency (i.e., bureaus, subcomponents, offices)
- ❑ **Scale up** successful activities
- ❑ Elevate and **accelerate activities that are losing momentum** and need encouragement
- ❑ **Align with key mission** areas to allow program and line staff to see their role and feel accountable
- ❑ Have **robust data available** to measure success

Strengthen your APGs by:

- ❑ Establishing a **formal governance** structure
- ❑ Developing a **model/map** which outlines the connection between your APG and the supporting indicators/programs/ projects through your implemented strategies (e.g., logic model, goal map, theory of change)
- ❑ Embedding APG indicators in goal/program **leadership performance plans**
- ❑ Ensuring a **dedicated goal leader** whose spends time focusing fully on the success of this goal
- ❑ **Seeking input** from peer agencies with similar mission types, stakeholder groups, and Congress
- ❑ Aligning goal **coordination with Agency Strategic Plan**, contributing to accomplishment of Strategic Objectives

Stay Tuned

The PIC team regularly hosts opportunities and provides resources to help agencies implement their Agency Priority Goals. For more information, reach out to the PIC staff at PICstaff@PIC.gov.