



# Outcomes Guidance

## July 2021

This guidance provides an overview of Outcomes required on work plans beginning April 20, 2018. If you have any questions or unique situations, you should reach out to your GTM/POTAC or GTR for direction.

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## What is an outcome?

An outcome is the effect or level of achievement that occurred because of an activity or service provided. For TA, expected outcomes are the intended results or effects the TA will have on a community, issue, or topic once the TA is completed. An expected outcome describes what will be different as a result of the TA. For the application of this new TA Portal interface, expected outcomes are the near-term results, effects, and differences after TA. Near-term is defined as a range beginning at TA completion to no later than 90 days post-TA.

To determine an outcome(s) for a TA engagement, ask yourself questions such as:

- What will change?
- Once the TA is complete, what will the TA enable the recipient to accomplish?
- What will result from the TA recipient's increase in knowledge and/or ability?
- What are the effects the TA is expected to have on the recipient?
- What change will demonstrate that the TA has been successful for the recipient?
- What kinds of measurable benefits might result from the TA?
- What current problem is the TA trying to solve?
- What is the expected benefit of the TA to American taxpayers?
- How would you determine if the TA was successful in the near-term?

## HUD Standardized Outcomes

HUD has developed standardized outcomes with TA Provider input. To view the full text of the 13 HUD outcomes, see [APPENDIX II: HUD OUTCOME CATEGORIES](#). TA Providers will select the appropriate HUD outcome category, then describe the specific TA outcomes by task as an outcome description, by task.

### Outcome Descriptions: What to include

Good outcome descriptions are important as they reflect a firm understating of the needed TA and state the end goal. Resources to review before writing outcome descriptions include the list of questions in the [What is an outcome?](#) section, [Appendix III: Examples of Outcomes](#), and the Outcome Example document located at [https://www.hud.gov/program\\_offices/comm\\_planning/cpdta/guidance](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/comm_planning/cpdta/guidance).

Outcome Descriptions	
Do	Don't
Be specific	Be vague
State capacity to be gained	List tasks or outputs
Mention who gains capacity (i.e. PJ, PHA, etc)	
Include program specifics	
Consider use in a survey	

### How do learning objectives, outputs, and outcomes differ?

- **Learning Objectives** describe the knowledge or skills received from a product, curriculum, or training and reflect the immediate impact.
- **Outputs** describe what was produced or delivered as a result of TA and apply to all work plan types.
  - The Community Compass NOFA defines outputs as *“Deliverables such as products and group learning opportunities that are usually quantified by number produced, number delivered, number of attendees, etc. Outputs do not measure a change in a customer’s behavior.”*
- **Outcomes** describe the near-term intended results or effects of the TA and apply to all work plan types.
  - The Community Compass NOFA defines outcomes as *“Results achieved or benefits derived from technical assistance or capacity building, such as changes in a customer’s management or operation of HUD-funded programs and activities.”*

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES
The knowledge or skills received from a product, curriculum, or training	Usually described with numbers (quantity, percentage, etc.)	The effects HUD TA has on the community or on issues
	Do not address the effects or impact of the TA services provided but rather represent the quantification of TA activities	The changes that occurred because of the TA provided

	Measurable and readily determined	Measurable and time limited, though it may take a while to realize or determine the full effect
	Describe what was produced	Statements of meaningful results or the value created

To see examples of outcomes, see [APPENDIX III: EXAMPLES OF OUTCOMES](#).

## Which types of work plans require outcomes and how are they entered?

Outcomes apply to all DRGR work plan types and outcomes are entered by task.

## Who identifies expected outcomes?

Outcomes may be identified by HUD or the TA Provider:

- *Outcomes identified by HUD:* HUD may identify outcomes when it makes an assignment to the TA Provider. For those assignments, the TA Provider should add the HUD-identified outcomes to the work plan. The TA Provider should contact HUD if the TA Provider feels that the outcomes identified by HUD should be adjusted.
- *Outcomes identified by the TA Provider:* When HUD does not identify outcomes at the time of assignment, the TA Provider will be responsible for developing the outcomes. Though outcomes will be approved by the GTR during the TA Portal work plan approval process, HUD encourages TA Providers to reach out to relevant GTMs/POTACs and Field Office staff during work plan drafting to discuss outcomes and ensure work plans adequately capture HUD’s intentions and expectations. The purpose of these discussions is to get HUD input during the work plan drafting process and to inform the TA Provider’s creation of outcomes for the work plan. Please note that this is not a new requirement or an added level of approval; input and discussions with HUD staff have always been part of work plan drafting, and this guidance simply reinforces the value of those discussions.

## Do administrative and coordination tasks require outcomes?

For administrative-related tasks such as work plan development and coordination, select the applicable Category 4 outcome:

Not Applicable HUD Outcome Category

- 4A: Task is related to work plan development or management of work
- 4B: Task is related to coordination

- 4C: Task is related to closeout
- 4D: Other

4A, 4B, and 4C should only be used for tasks related to administration, coordination, and closeout. Use the following template language in the “Outcome Description” text box for 4A, 4B, or 4C: *“This task is administrative in nature and therefore does not require an expected outcome.”* (Note: For 4B insert “coordination” and 4C insert “closeout”.)

4D “Other” should only be used in rare circumstances, such as when there are multiple work plans (planned or unplanned) supporting the same TA engagement. HUD program staff, the GTR, and the Provider must agree to the use of 4D.

## Does each TA engagement within a work plan need an expected outcome?

For work plans that contain multiple TA engagements, each TA engagement will need an expected outcome. For instance, for On-Call, each engagement is identified by a unique task, a HUD outcome category will be selected and a description will be added that reflects the TA and outcome expected.

## Specific work plan type considerations

### On Call work plan considerations

On Call work plans can pose challenges regarding expected outcomes. On Call work plans generally have multiple planned or expected engagements, but the recipient or exact TA need is not always known ahead of time. Therefore, drafting an accurate expected outcome is not always possible.

For On Call work plans, TA Providers will need to add outcomes by task for each planned engagement, initially, then edit the work plan as engagements are assigned to add specific expected outcomes for each engagement with a detailed description.

The template language for an initial On Call work plan-level outcome is: *“Expected Outcomes will be added at the task level as On Call engagements are assigned.”* Upon assignment of an On Call engagement, Providers will need to edit the work plan to add expected outcomes. When assigning a new on-call assignment, POTACs and GTMs will remind TA Providers that expected outcomes are needed.

If the engagements and recipients are known ahead time for an On Call work plan, expected outcomes for each engagement should be added when the work plan is being developed.

Editing expected outcomes is an amendment and therefore must be reviewed and approved by the POTAC/GTM and the GTR.

### Training & products related work plan considerations

Training delivery and product related work plans will have learning objectives associated with them (for work assigned or edited after December 21, 2017). Providers should ensure that learning objectives and expected outcomes align in Product Development and Training Delivery work plans.

Many training delivery and product related work plans create products and tools for the entire housing grantee community. As a result, outcome descriptions should be written with the broad array of TA recipients in mind.

Training delivery related work plans	Product related work plans
TA - Workshops	TA - Data Reporting, Analysis, Management
TA - Peer/Innovative Learning	TA - HMIS Data Lab
TA - Delivering Workshops	TA - Delivering Workshops Materials
TA - Other Workshops	TA - Written Products
TA - Problem-Solving Clinics	TA - Other Written Products
TA - Train-the-Trainer Session	TA - Develop Web Products
TA - Web-based learning/webinars	TA - Other Web Products

## Approval of outcomes

Outcomes will be approved during the normal work plan approval process, and there will be no separate process to receive GTR approval for outcomes. If the only edit to a work plan is an edit to an outcome or description, the TA Provider should alert the POTAC and GTR by commenting, *“This submission is an amendment due to the change/addition of an outcome.”*

## Keep in mind: How will expected outcomes work in a TA survey?

TA surveys will measure the effectiveness of TA engagements in achieving the expected outcomes.

TA Providers are expected to create and administer surveys for the following TA Types: TA – Direct, TA – Other Direct, TA - On-Call, and TA- Needs Assessment. TA surveys will not be used for training delivery or product related work plans. Training delivery related work plans use *training* surveys to measure the effectiveness of a training and the achievement of a training’s Learning Objectives. Training surveys will continue to be initiated using the HUD User system.

TA Providers will use DRGR to initiate TA surveys that are based on the approved expected outcomes. Therefore, a TA Provider should keep in mind the format of the TA surveys when creating expected outcomes for a work plan. See the *TA Performance Survey Guidance* at [https://www.hud.gov/program\\_offices/comm\\_planning/cpdta/guidance](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/comm_planning/cpdta/guidance) to become more familiar with the survey formats. Expected outcomes should be concise and clear, and they should coherently fit into the format of the surveys. If an expected outcome will not make sense in the TA survey, the TA Provider should revise the expected outcome as necessary at the work plan development stage and engage the GTM/POTAC and GTR as needed.

Because expected outcomes are the measures for TA surveys, it is critical for TA Providers and HUD staff to ensure the expected outcomes developed are accurate, achievable, and at the right level of detail.

Work plans with poor, inaccurate, insufficient, or missing expected outcomes will not result in TA survey results that will be meaningful or useful and could reflect poorly on the TA Provider in terms of past performance in future cooperative agreement competitions where survey results are used as part of the scoring.

## Appendix I: FAQs

**Question:** How do outcomes relate to outputs that are identified at the task level of a work plan?

**Answer:** The outputs associated to tasks in a work plan describe what will be produced (number of training sessions, number or type of products, etc.). Expected outcomes are the intended results, effects, or changes the TA will have on a community, issue, or topic once the TA is completed. In many cases, outputs describe the tools that will be used to affect outcomes. Outputs also may form the building blocks and foundations for outcomes. There is not necessarily a one-to-one ratio between outputs and outcomes.

**Question:** Do I have to add both learning objectives *and* outcomes to training delivery and product related work plans? ([see list above for applicability](#) – list of TA Types)

**Answer:** Yes. Learning objectives and outcomes are different, and both are required for these work plans. Please see section [How do learning objectives, outputs, and outcomes differ?](#) and [Appendix III](#) for more information. TA surveys will not be used for training delivery or product related work plans.

**Question:** How do I handle expected outcomes for TA assignments that are on multiple work plans and or awards?

**Answer:** This is a situation that does occur in TA, both planned and unplanned. There are too many scenarios to possibly address them all, nor is there one possible solution. In general, consult your GTR and GTM/POTAC to discuss the situation and develop a plan that is logical and results in good measurable outcomes. Outcomes could be repeated on multiple work plans (this does not mean multiple TA surveys must be generated), or outcomes could be entered on one of the work plans for the purposes of the TA survey, then on the other work plan(s), HUD outcome 4D could be utilized for the “Entire Work Plan.” If there are multiple work plans that have outcomes that are unique to each work plan, then each could be separate and surveyed (if applicable) as such. Document what the plan is to capture and track outcomes for TA if the assignment is split and on multiple work plans. Documentation can be in the Work Plan Scope field or in HUD outcome 4D as appropriate.

**Question:** The guidance describes expected outcomes as the near-term results, effects, or differences after TA. Near term is defined as a range beginning at [TA completion](#) to no later than 90 days after TA. Does TA completion mean the end of the work plan? What is meant by TA completion?

**Answer:** TA completion is not going to be the same for every work plan, nor is there one definition to satisfy all potential scenarios. Determining the end of TA should be done in consultation with HUD program staff. TA completion, in general, is not the work plan period of performance end date, but rather a prior point in time when work plan deliverables and task completions occur and no further TA is expected by the recipient nor planned by the Provider. TA completion would be the beginning time (of near-term) where expected outcomes could possibly begin to be achieved and surveyed.

## Appendix II: HUD Outcome Categories

**HUD Outcome Category #1:** Improved capacity to develop plans and priorities informed by community needs and program/policy goals.

- **1A: Improved capacity to collect, analyze, and share data** (e.g., improved data on populations served, program results or impacts, or community conditions)
- **1B: Improved capacity to gather and use resident and community input** (e.g., implemented new strategies for identifying needs, for determining priorities and developing plans, or for measuring results of actions taken)
- **1C: Improved capacity to develop high-quality, compliant plans that identify clear priorities and accurately reflect community needs and input** (e.g., improved PHA Plans, Consolidated Plans, Indian Housing Plans)
- **1D: Improved coordination and alignment with other community or regional plans** (e.g., HUD plans aligned with plans of other HUD or federal programs, local and regional government agencies, service providers, or nonprofit organizations)

**HUD Outcome Category #2:** Improved capacity to design strategies that align with plans and priorities.

- **2A: Improved capacity to select programmatic strategies that address program or policy goals and community needs** (e.g., determined which eligible activities could most effectively address needs)
- **2B: Improved capacity to design system-wide strategies that address community needs** (e.g., designed innovative multi-disciplinary strategies, designed coordinated place-based development to leverage neighborhood impacts)
- **2C: Improved capacity to design effective partnerships or cross-jurisdictional relationships that address community needs** (e.g., developed a framework for collaboration, established new or innovative partnerships, developed governance charters or memoranda of understanding)
- **2D: Improved alignment of resources with program-, system- or community-wide goals** (e.g., developed an investment plan to support a system-wide strategy, developed resource allocation processes to improve targeting of resources to plan goals)

**HUD Outcome Category #3:** Improved capacity to deliver projects, programs or systems that address community needs



- **3A: Improved staffing or organizational structure** (e.g., revised job descriptions to reflect skills required to implement program, merged departments to achieve greater efficiency or alignment)
- **3B: Improved administrative processes or infrastructure** (e.g., improved cost and participant eligibility verification procedures, instituted new policies and procedures to improve consistency of operations or decision-making, streamlined process steps that reduce application processing times, established new systems for monitoring conditions of assets or obligating funds, implemented new sub-recipient risk assessment and monitoring protocols)
- **3C: Improved financial management systems, controls, oversight to conform with 2 CFR Part 200 (OMB Omni Circular) and generally accepted accounting principles** (e.g., completed A-133 or other financial audits, closed A-133 or other financial audit findings, implemented internal controls, demonstrated adequate Quick Ratio)
- **3D: Improved program, grant, and regulatory compliance** (e.g., improved staff understanding of regulations, improved quality or timeliness of reporting, resolved audit or monitoring findings)
- **3E: Improved capacity to substantively change the ways partners interact or conduct their work in order to address community needs** (e.g., implemented innovative multi-agency strategies, implemented coordinated place-based development to align resources from various funders to yield more substantial results, implemented coordinated entry process to improve targeting and access to homeless assistance)

**Not Applicable HUD Outcome Category**

- 4A: Task is related to work plan development or management of work
- 4B: Task is related to coordination
- 4C: Task is related to closeout
- 4D: Other

## Appendix III: Examples of Outcomes

TA Type	Topic	Learning Objective(s) <u>(for training delivery and product related WPs)</u>	HUD Outcome(s) Category	Outcome Description
TA – Direct	HOME Troubled Projects	Not Applicable	3D: Improved program, grant, and regulatory compliance	The PJ will have the tools to determine the administrative relief that it requires from HUD for an existing HOME assisted rental project including investing additional HOME funds to rehabilitate and recapitalize the project to preserve HOME units.
TA – Direct	HOPE VI Redevelopment/Repositioning Plan & capital program	Not Applicable	3A: Improved staffing or organizational structure	Grantee staff are trained to have the knowledge and tools to undertake their roles.
TA – Direct	Phase II-Housing Rehab Program	Not Applicable	3D: Improved program, grant, and regulatory compliance	The grantee will adopt and begin to implement program guidelines that will result in improving the quality of the housing stock currently owned and occupied by low income households.
TA – Direct	Recovery of Energy Performance Contracting (EPC) Project	Not Applicable	3B: Improved administrative processes or infrastructure	The grantee implements corrective actions to fulfill the goals of the EPC project.

TA Type	Topic	Learning Objective(s) <u>(for training delivery and product related WPs)</u>	HUD Outcome(s) Category	Outcome Description
TA - Needs Assessment	Addressing Revolving Loan Funds (RLF)	Not Applicable	1C: Improved capacity to develop high-quality, compliant plans that identify clear priorities and accurately reflect community needs and input	The grantee will begin to re-design their Community Development Block Grants RLF Program to maximize use of RLF funds to meet community needs in a timely manner.
TA - Needs Assessment	CDBG Program Management	Not Applicable	3D: Improved program, grant, and regulatory compliance	Corrective action steps related to the CDBG formula grant program to address program inconsistencies are finalized and implementation begins.

TA Type	Topic	Learning Objective(s) <u>(for training delivery and product related WPs)</u>	HUD Outcome(s) Category	Outcome Description
TA - Web-based learning/webinars	2 CFR Part 200 Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The TDHEs/Tribes will be able to state the required timeline for implementation of 2 CFR Part 200.</li> <li>• The TDHE or Tribe will be able to identify applicable exceptions to 2 CFR Part 200.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3C Improved financial management systems, controls, oversight to conform with 2 CFR Part 200 (OMB Omniscircular) and generally accepted accounting principles</li> <li>• 3D Improved program, grant, and regulatory compliance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The TDHE/Tribe meets the implementation timeline for financial management controls and financial audits.</li> <li>• The TDHE/Tribe is equipped to meet the implementation timeline for 2 CFR 200 through completed and timely A-133 submissions.</li> <li>• The TDHE/Tribe staff have an improved understanding of regulations to properly document or request exceptions to 2 CFR 200.</li> </ul>
TA - Problem-Solving Clinics	Environmental Review Training	The PHA will be able to summarize the Environmental Review requirements for the Public Housing program.	3D Improved program, grant, and regulatory compliance	PHA has a trained staff to more effectively comply with requirements to complete ERRs.

<b>TA Type</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Learning Objective(s) (for training delivery and product related WPs)</b>	<b>HUD Outcome(s) Category</b>	<b>Outcome Description</b>
TA - Web-based learning/webinars	CNA e-Tool Trainings	Assessors and/or Lenders will be able to describe how HUD expects the CNA e-Tool to be used.	3D: Improved program, grant, and regulatory compliance	Lenders and assessors will be able to better comply with the requirements for undertaking and completing a CNA using the e-Tool.  Lenders will be able to improve the quality of their CNA e-Tool submissions.
TA – Written Products	Housing Counseling	Housing counseling grantees will be able to navigate and locate key information in 2 CFR 200 most pertinent to the program.	3C: Improved financial management systems, controls, oversight to conform with 2 CFR Part 200 (OMB Omniscircular) and generally accepted accounting principles	Grantees are equipped to manage the administrative and financial aspects of federal awards.

## Appendix IV: Template Language

The table below represents common situations where an outcome description can default to the recommended template language. These situations are described throughout this document and are compiled here as a reference.

<b>Situation</b>	<b>Template language to add to “Outcomes” open text field in the TA Portal</b>
Not Applicable HUD Outcome (4A, 4B, 4C, or 4D).	This task is administrative in nature and therefore does not require an expected outcome. (Note: For 4B insert “coordination” and 4C insert “closeout”.)
On Call work plans where the exact engagements are not known at the time of assignment will need outcome. Select the most appropriate HUD outcome (edit later if needed).	Outcome descriptions will be added On Call engagements are assigned.