

EVALUATING PROGRAMS: REQUIREMENTS
AND PROCEDURES**§ 2522.700 How does evaluation differ from performance measurement?**

(a) Evaluation is a more in-depth, rigorous effort to measure the impact of programs. While performance measurement and evaluation both include systematic data collection and measurement of progress, evaluation uses scientifically-based research methods to assess the effectiveness of programs by comparing the observed program outcomes with what would have happened in the absence of the program. Unlike performance measures, evaluations estimate the impacts of programs by comparing the outcomes for individuals receiving a service or participating in a program to the outcomes for similar individuals not receiving a service or not participating in a program. For example, an evaluation of a literacy program may compare the reading ability of students in a program over time to a similar group of students not participating in a program.

(b) Performance measurement is the process of systematically and regularly collecting and monitoring data related to the direction of observed changes in communities, participants (members), or end beneficiaries receiving your program's services. It is intended to provide an indication of your program's operations and performance. In contrast to evaluation, it is not intended to establish a causal relationship between your program and a desired (or undesired) program outcome. For example, a performance measure for a literacy program may include the percentage of students receiving services from your program who increase their reading ability from "below grade level" to "at or above grade level". This measure indicates something good is happening to your program's service beneficiaries, but it does not indicate that the change can be wholly attributed to your program's services.

[70 FR 39603, July 8, 2005]

§ 2522.710 What are my evaluation requirements?

(a) If you are a State commission, you must establish and enforce evaluation

requirements for your State formula subgrantees, as you deem appropriate.

(b) If you are a State competitive or direct AmeriCorps grantee (other than an Education Award Program grantee), and your average annual AmeriCorps program grant is \$500,000 or more, you must arrange for an independent evaluation of your program, and you must submit the evaluation with any application to AmeriCorps for competitive funds as required in § 2522.730 of this subpart.

(c) If you are a State competitive or direct AmeriCorps grantee whose average annual AmeriCorps program grant is less than \$500,000, or an Education Award Program grantee, you must conduct an internal evaluation of your program, and you must submit the evaluation with any application to AmeriCorps for competitive funds as required in § 2522.730 of this subpart.

(d) AmeriCorps may, in its discretion, supersede these requirements with an alternative evaluation approach, including one conducted by the AmeriCorps at the national level.

(e) Grantees must cooperate fully with all AmeriCorps evaluation activities.

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§ 2522.720 How many years must my evaluation cover?

(a) If you are a State formula grantee, you must conduct an evaluation, as your State commission requires.

(b) If you are a State competitive or direct AmeriCorps grantee, your evaluation must cover a minimum of one year but may cover longer periods.

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§ 2522.730 How and when do I submit my evaluation to the AmeriCorps?

(a) If you are an existing grantee re-competing for AmeriCorps funds for the first time, you must submit a summary of your evaluation efforts or plan to date, and a copy of any evaluation that has been completed, as part of your application for funding.

(b) If you again compete for AmeriCorps funding after a second