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Quick Reference Tool for Planning Councils: Preparing and Using an Annual Calendar[1]

What is a Planning Council/Recipient annual calendar?

It is a monthly calendar, usually in table format, that lists both the main tasks of the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP) Part A Planning Council (PC) and the PC-related tasks of the Part A recipient, by month, side by side.

Why use a calendar?

1. **To make PC-recipient interaction more efficient.** The work of the PC and recipient are closely interrelated in terms of both tasks and timing. Having a joint calendar helps ensure that all legislative requirements are met, all required submissions to the funder are on time, and tasks are scheduled to avoid crises around deadlines. The recipient needs information from the PC in order to submit materials to meet deadlines set by the HIV/AIDS Bureau (HAB), and the PC cannot make sound decisions in preparation for those deadlines unless it has needed information from the recipient. For example, the recipient must include the PC's priorities and allocations in the annual application. The PC needs considerable data from the recipient such as an updated epi profile, expenditure and client utilization data as input to decisions about priorities and allocations. The PC must complete an assessment of the efficiency of the administrative mechanism (AAM) every year, the recipient must respond to any recommendations for change based on identified issues – and the annual application must include a narrative summarizing both.
2. **To help make PC and committee workloads manageable and avoid overload for PC members and PC Support (PCS) staff at certain times of the year.** Some tasks must be completed by a specific date, and more than one committee may be involved. Joint scheduling helps ensure that each committee understands how its work and deadlines affect other committees and the full PC. For example, needs assessment efforts need to be completed in the spring to support an annual data presentation and the priority setting and resource allocation (PSRA) process that typically involves several committees and the PC as a whole. Use of a combined calendar also reduces avoidable overload. For example, most PCs – and PCS staff – are extremely busy doing PSRA in the late spring and early summer. So the committee responsible for Service Standards may want to do its intensive reviews and updates before PSRA begins or after it ends, so that both members and staff have time to focus on it.
3. **To summarize a lot of information on a few pages that everyone can review, understand, and use.** Major committee tasks, activities, and deadlines can be detailed in individual committee work plans, with major tasks and deadlines summarized in the annual calendar. The PC can see key recipient deadlines, like due dates for reports. Work overlap or overload can be identified and resolved at the beginning of the year, rather than surprising people during the year.

[1] Prepared by EGMC in January 2020.

Developing an Annual Calendar

To develop an annual calendar:

1. **Decide whether to do use a calendar year (January-December) or a Part A program year (March – February).**
2. **Agree on who is responsible.** Often PCS coordinate the process, working with the Executive Committee, with the Chair or Co-Chairs of each committee responsible for providing the information from their committees.
3. **Set a deadline for calendar development,** usually the end of the month before the start of the program or calendar year.
4. **Decide what information to include.** Usually you will want to include the major tasks of each committee and the full PC, including starting and completion dates, and the major recipient tasks that are related to PC, such as due dates for the application and reports.
5. **Choose a format.** The sample calendar provided here is very simple. It uses three columns and includes Month, PC Activities, and Recipient Activities.
6. **Take information from individual committee work plans to create the PC side of the calendar.** List the major tasks and deliverables by month. If there is flexibility or uncertainty about start and due dates, be sure that is noted.
7. **Ask the recipient for key dates and deliverables and add them.** If you have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the PC and recipient, you might want to insert the reports the recipient provides each year as listed in the MOU.
8. **Check to be sure all legislatively required tasks are included,** with correct completion dates. Be especially aware of the likely Part A application due date, since many tasks are scheduled so they can provide input to the application.
9. **Identify and resolve imbalance and overload.** If some months have too much work or too many deadlines, adjust by moving flexible tasks or deadlines. Be sure you aren't scheduling a lot of activity around major holidays.
10. **Review of the semi-final version of the calendar.** Usually the PCS and Chair/Co-Chairs review it and have the recipient look as well. Then it goes to the Executive Committee to ensure final committee input. Present it for approval by the full PC, and emphasize that members need to keep a copy handy for use throughout the year to come.

Sample Annual Calendar

Following is a model annual calendar. Many deadlines are similar across jurisdictions, since federal requirements and due dates are the same for all Part A programs. However, jurisdictions vary in when member terms begin and end, orientation and training are provided, and Chairs/Co-Chairs and committee leaders are chosen. There are also variations in review and approval time for documents within local government. For example, some recipients need 2-3 weeks for application review and approval prior to submission, while others require less than a week. This affects when all PC input to the application must be submitted. This model calendar assumes that an integrated/comprehensive plan is in place and is being monitored and updated, but no new plan is due during this program year.

Month	PC Activity	Recipient Activity
January	• Beginning of member terms • Orientation for new members • Needs assessment in process • Service Standards review in process	• Final reallocations for the year that ends at the end of February
February	• Election of officers • Needs assessment in process • Committee development/approval of work plans for coming program year • Meeting with recipient on data needs and reports to be provided during this program year • Consumer Committee training plan completed • Completion of Service Standards review for this program year	• Receipt of Notice of Award for program year starting March 1 – sometimes a partial award (may include Conditions of Award that involve the PC) • Meeting with PC on data and reports to be provided, including scope, formats, and due dates
March	• Final allocations based on actual award amount (if full award is received) • Any PC input on Conditions of Award provided to recipient • Training for new officers including Committee Chairs/Co-Chairs • Needs assessment in process • Review of progress on Integrated Plan	• Initial closeout of prior program year • Submission of Ryan White Services Report (RSR) • Review/preparation of response to Conditions of Award
April	• Town halls/community meetings for input to PSRA • Needs assessment completed • Data from recipient and other sources obtained and reviewed/integrated • Identification of any data problems or gaps • Directives development across committees – consideration of service models, special populations, and geographic focus needs • Updating of Integrated Plan work plan as needed, with assignments to committees [may be joint with State or other Part A programs]	• Review of performance and outcome measures for prior year • Input to Integrated Plan update • Completion or obtaining of epi profile/trends report • Utilization report and performance/clinical outcomes data summary for prior year to PC
May	• Assessment of the efficiency of the administrative mechanism (AAM) begins • Priority setting and resource allocation (PSRA) begins • Data presentation prepared • Data presentation provided to full PC	• Final closeout of prior year • Submission of Annual Progress Report for prior year • Submission of Program Expenditure Report for prior year • Submission of Program Terms Report and Program Submission for current year • Expenditure report for prior year to PC • Participation in data presentation
June	• Possible directives shared with Executive Committee and recipient • Priority setting and resource allocation continues	• Review of first quarter expenditures • Participation in PSRA • Discussion with PC of costs associated with possible directives

Month	PC Activity	Recipient Activity
July	• Priority setting and resource allocation work in committee and full PC • Presentation/discussion of directives • PC approval of priorities, allocations, and directives • AAM report drafted	• Submission of Annual Federal Financial Report • Submission of Carryover Request (exact amount) • Participation in PSRA • Initial work on Part A application
August	• Submission of priority setting and resource allocation results to recipient • Presentation/discussion of assessment of the administrative mechanism (AAM) report • Development of PC sections of Part A application (PCS) • Negotiation of PC budget amount for following year with recipient • Development of PC budget for application • Reallocation of current year funds if needed based on expenditures	• Preparation of Part A application • Negotiation of PC budget amount • Request to PC for approval of reallocation of funds for current year if needed based on expenditures • Preparation of response to AAM report
September	• Review of draft application as provided by recipient • Preparation of PC letter of assurance to accompany application, signed by Chair/Co-Chairs • Open nominations process begins	• Meeting with PC representatives on draft application • Completion, revision, and submission of Part A application
October	• Review/updating of selected service standards begins (3-year cycle) • Planning for needs assessment including committee training • Annual review of Bylaws and Policies and Procedures • PC recruitment and interviews • Annual committee review of system of care	• Issuance of RFP for some or all Part A services (consistent with PC directives) – usually on a multi-year cycle
November	• Rapid reallocations • Start of needs assessment activities • Annual PC training and retreat • Identification of service categories for Service Standards update (based on 3-year cycle and any categories with allocations) • Committee work plan updates • PC member recommendations to CEO	• Rapid reallocations
December	• Approval of Estimated Unobligated Balance (UOB) and estimated carryover request • Consumer Committee training needs assessed • Approval by PC of needed Bylaws changes • Completion of new Annual Calendar	• Submission of UOB and estimated carryover request