



2026 WINTER TRAINING CONFERENCE

“Rooted in Hope”



What's the SOP?

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www.nascsp.org

Agenda

What are SOPs and why do they matter?

Sample SOP focus areas:

- Universal intake
- Customer life cycle tracking
- Connecting services to outcomes
- Data collection, monitoring and storytelling
- Using AI to streamline reporting and analysis

If it's not documented...
...it didn't happen!



What are they?



Standard Operating Procedures are

- established or prescribed methods to be followed routinely for the performance of designated operations or in designated situations (Merriam-Webster).
- a set of step-by-step instructions for performing a routine activity.
- uniformly written procedures, with detailed instructions to record routine operations, processes and practices.
- a way of documenting process to make them repeatable and to ensure tasks are completed consistently and efficiently.



Organizational Policies vs. SOPs

- Policies document broad principles, such as ethical codes of conduct, human resources, or conflicts of interest.
- SOPs are detailed, step by step instructions on how to complete specific tasks, such as determining program eligibility or collecting and documenting data.
- Changes in policies can mean we need to then change or update our SOPs.

SOPs are NOT meant to be stifling or burdensome!

- A common misconception is that SOPs are rigid and inflexible; however, well-designed SOPs enhance adaptability by providing a clear foundation upon which changes can be made when necessary (Power, 2013).
- SOPs allow an organization to consistently direct staff to the correct procedures for program delivery while allowing individualization as needed.

Think of SOPs as a means to:

Make work
easier,

Reduce
confusion,

Help with
onboarding and
turnover,

Aid in knowledge
retention,

Ensure
consistency in
service delivery,

Improve data
quality,

Support a
Results Oriented
culture, and

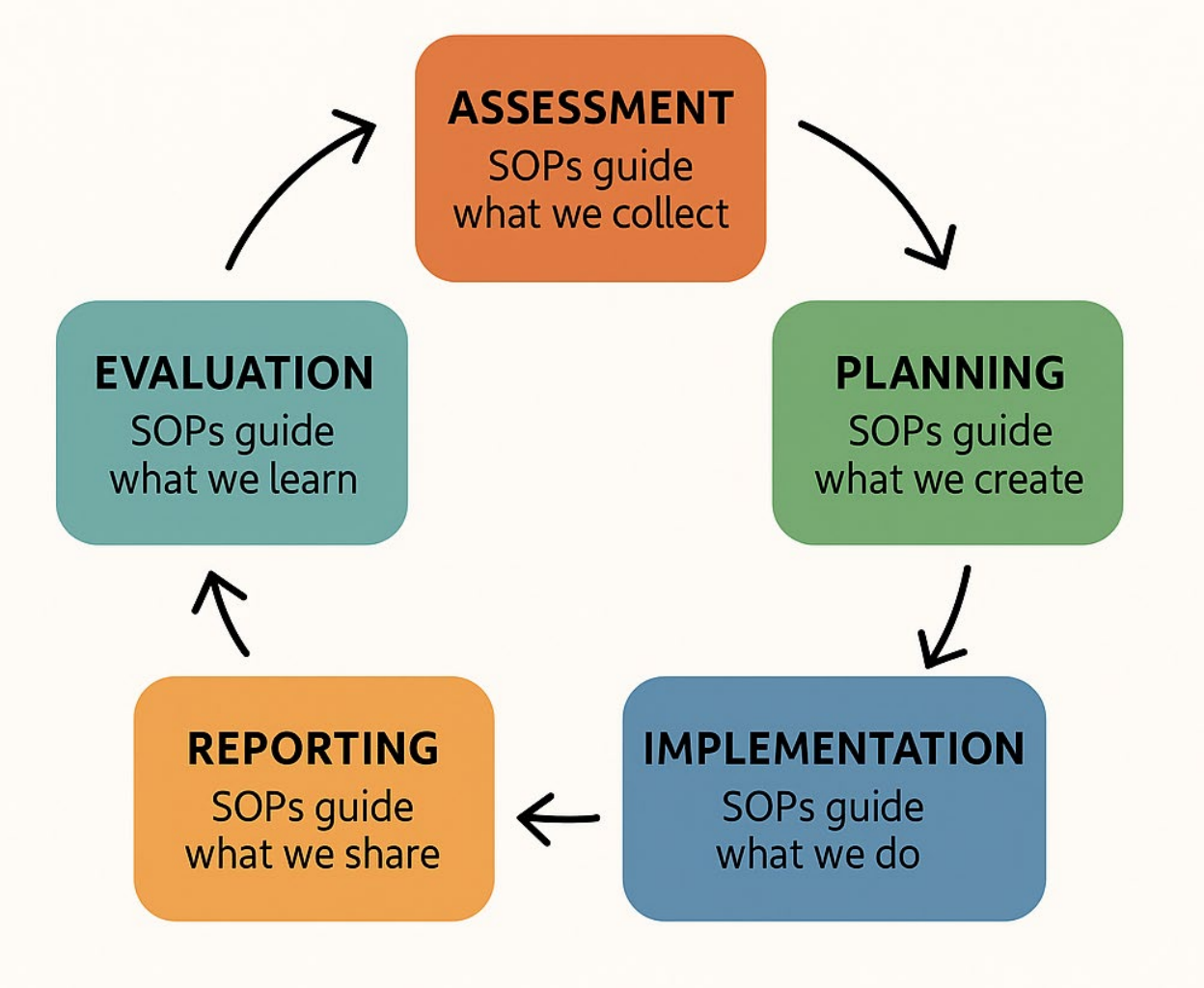
Ultimately show
the impact of
Community
Action!

Why SOPs matter for performance management!

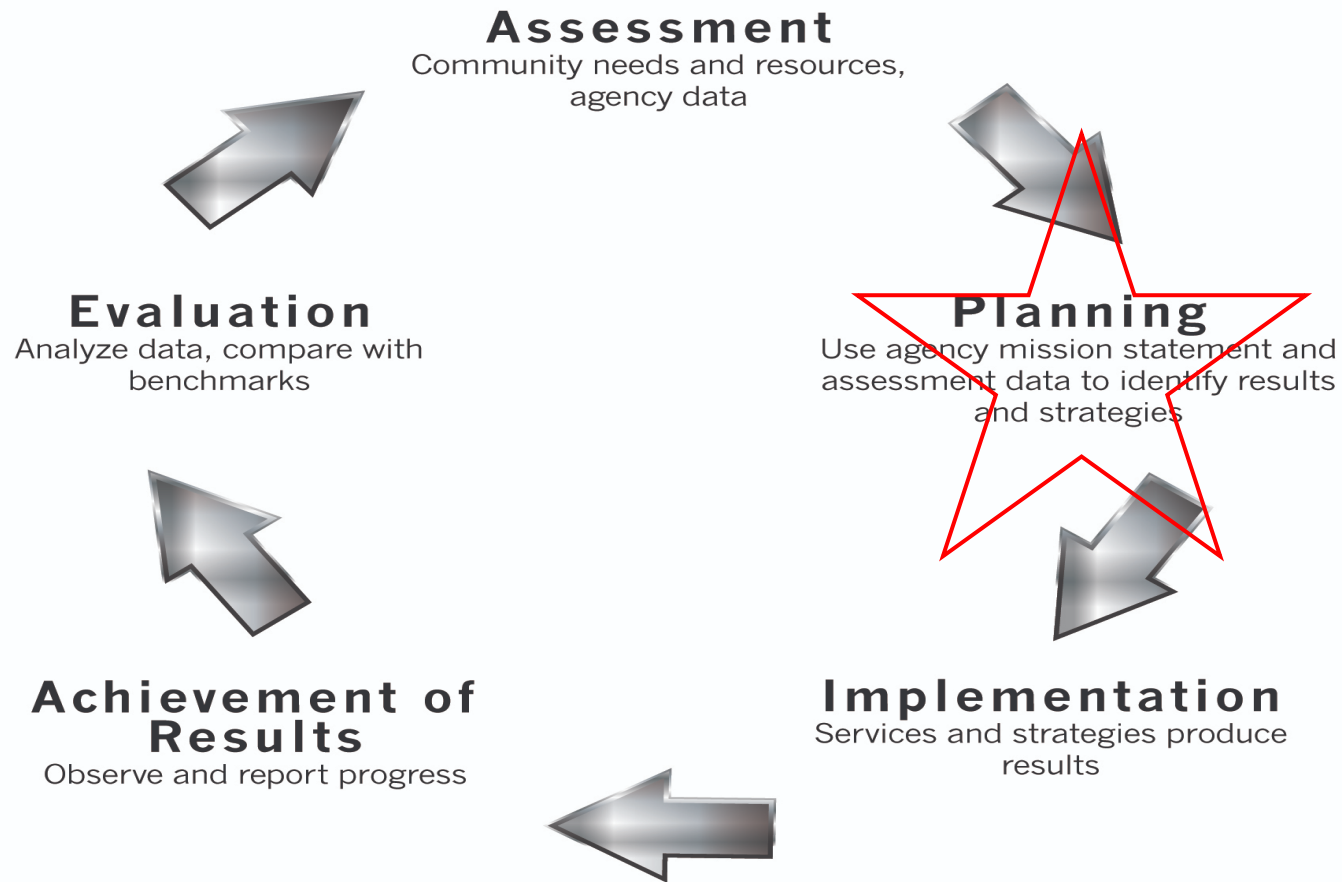


Alignment of SOPs and the ROMA cycle

Written SOPs provide structured methods to carry out each phase of the ROMA cycle.



The Results Oriented Management and Accountability Cycle



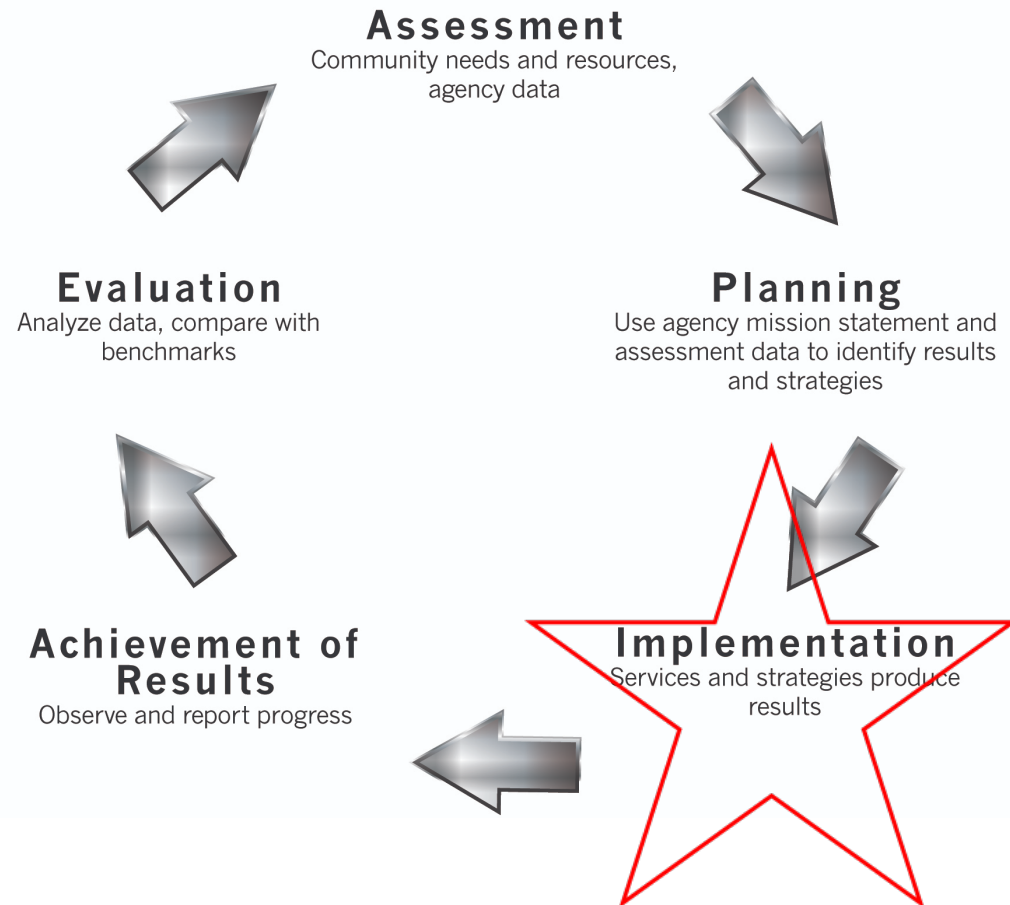
Planning

Peter Drucker tells us that the written plan will help us “get the right things done”.

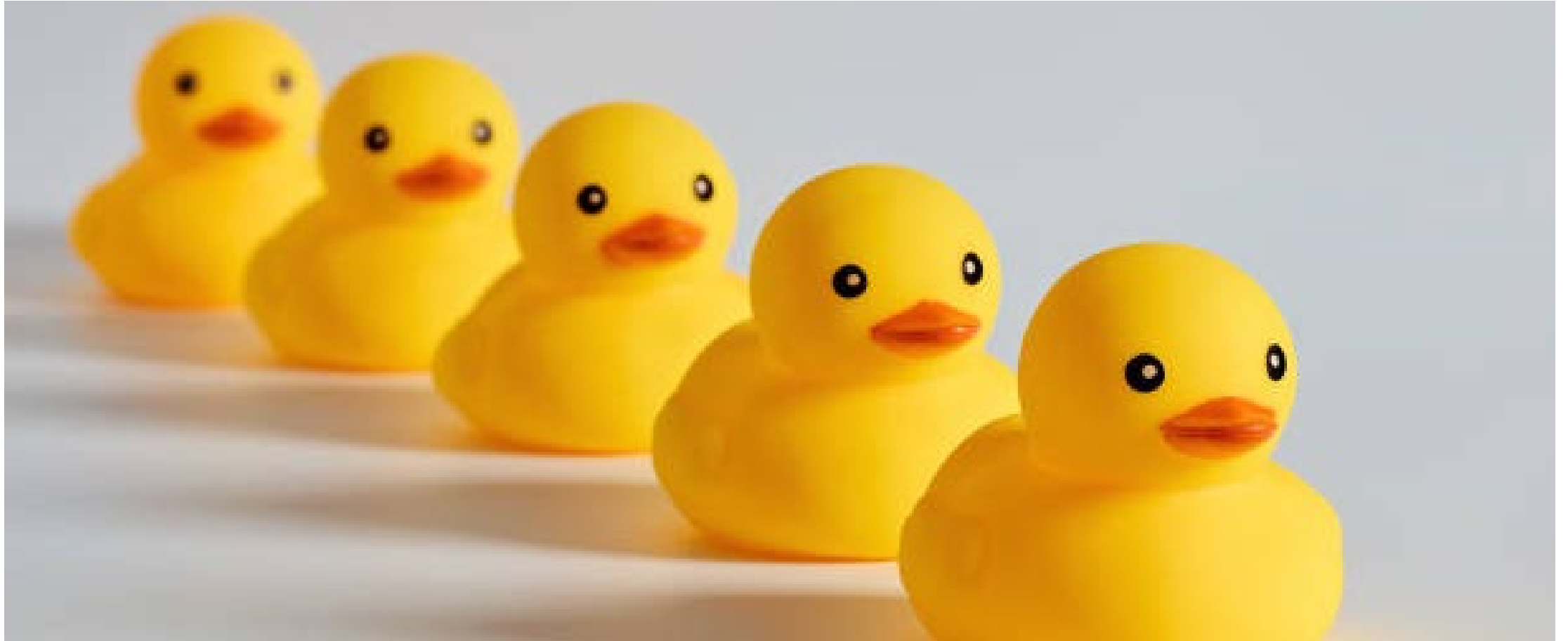
Implementation

And plans get implemented by people who are informed, assigned, and equipped!

The Results Oriented Management and Accountability Cycle



SOPs ensure consistency across CAAs



Check all that apply!



My CAA or CAAs in my state:

- Has/have different interpretations for what counts as a service
- Has/have different timelines for data collection, entry, and reporting
- Cannot define when a customer becomes a customer
- Lack/s clearly defined process for customer follow up
- Experience/s staff turnover
- Spend/s more time doing “data clean up” than “data analysis”
- Has/have monitoring errors or findings

SOPs can help CAAs



...to establish clear protocols, promote accountability, and help with staff training and retention by providing a knowledge base and shared language for consistent outcomes.

So What?



Clear, standardized procedures allow organizations to maintain operational integrity, especially when dealing with complex processes (Fraser, 2011).



Programs that are at risk of inconsistent service delivery—due to staff turnover, varied levels of training, or resource limitations—can undermine program success.

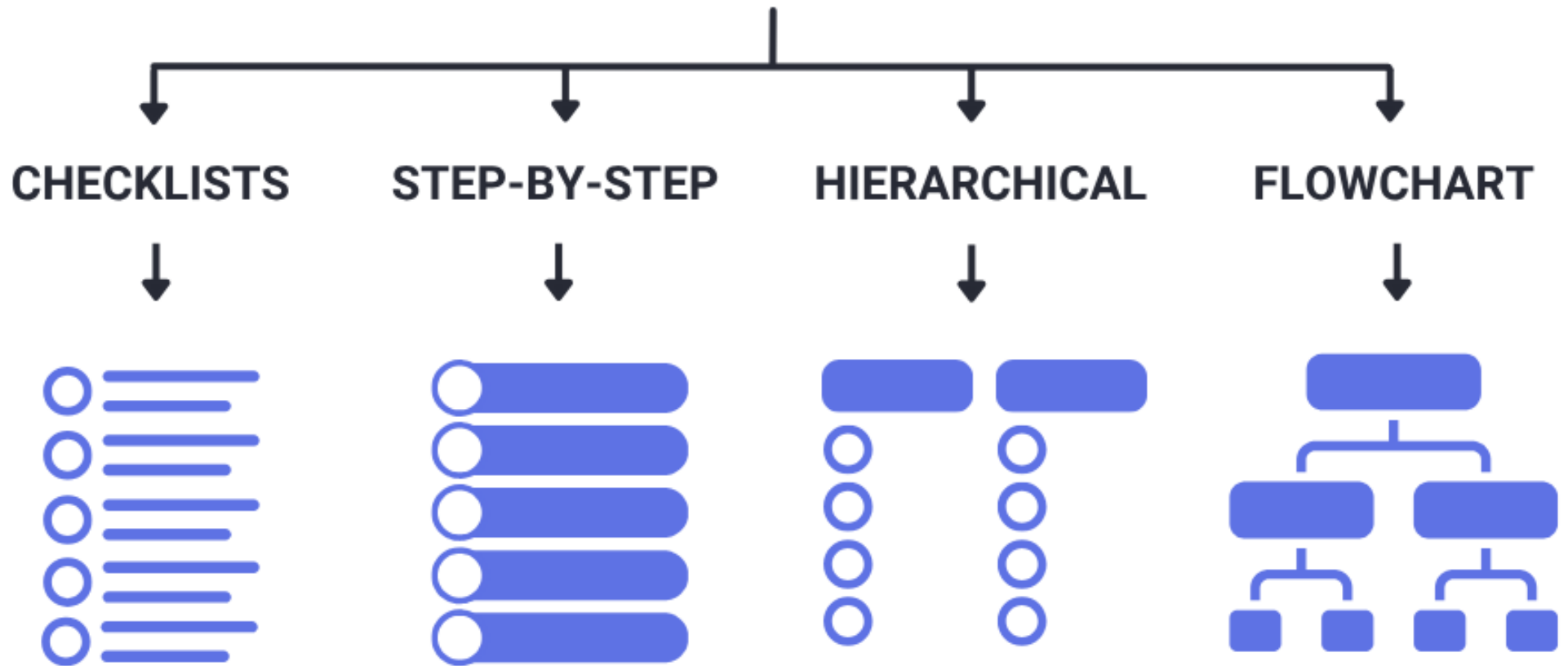


SOPs mitigate this risk by providing a clear framework that staff can follow to ensure that all aspects of the program are delivered in a uniform manner.

There's more!

- SOPs increase the likelihood that all participants receive the same level of quality care and support, regardless of differences in their personal situations or the staff assigned to them.
- Consistency is critical in programs where the success of participants often depends on the coordinated efforts of various professionals, including case managers, counselors, and social workers.
- Without clearly defined procedures, accountability can be diluted, leading to potential lapses in service provision.

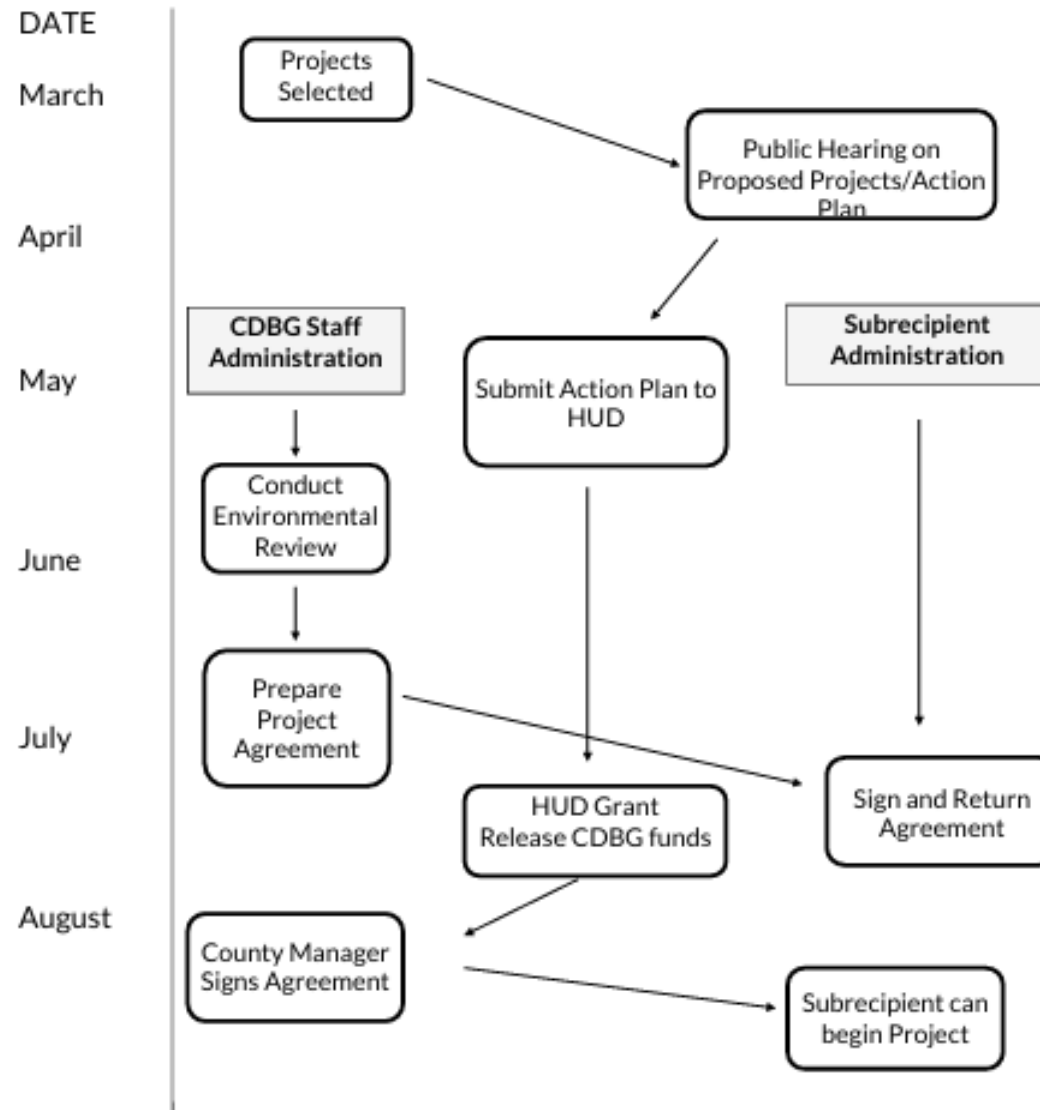
Types of SOP Documents



Standard Operating Procedure Format Choices and Criteria

Many Decisions?	More than 10 steps?	Best format
No	No	Step by Step or Checklist
No	Yes	Hierarchical
Yes	No	Flow chart
Yes	Yes	Flow chart

EXHIBIT 1-1
CLARK COUNTY CDBG PROCESS FLOW CHART



Universal Intake



Application Intake Checklist

Application Status

- Application accepted year-round
- Funding available → served first-come, first-served by application date
- Funding unavailable → applicant placed on waitlist

Approved Attendees Present

- Applicant present **or**
- Spouse present **or**
- Authorized representative (elderly/disabled applicant)
- Disruptive individuals asked to wait outside (if applicable)

Applicant Understanding Verified

- Applicant can read forms **or**
- Caseworker read all forms/declarations aloud
- Applicant confirmed understanding before signing

Signatures Collected

- Applicant signed all required documents
- If spouse signed, reason head of household was absent documented

Alternate Signature Completed (if needed)

- Applicant unable to write
- “X” used for signature
 - Applicant’s name printed/typed under “X”
- Witness signature obtained

Step by Step Format

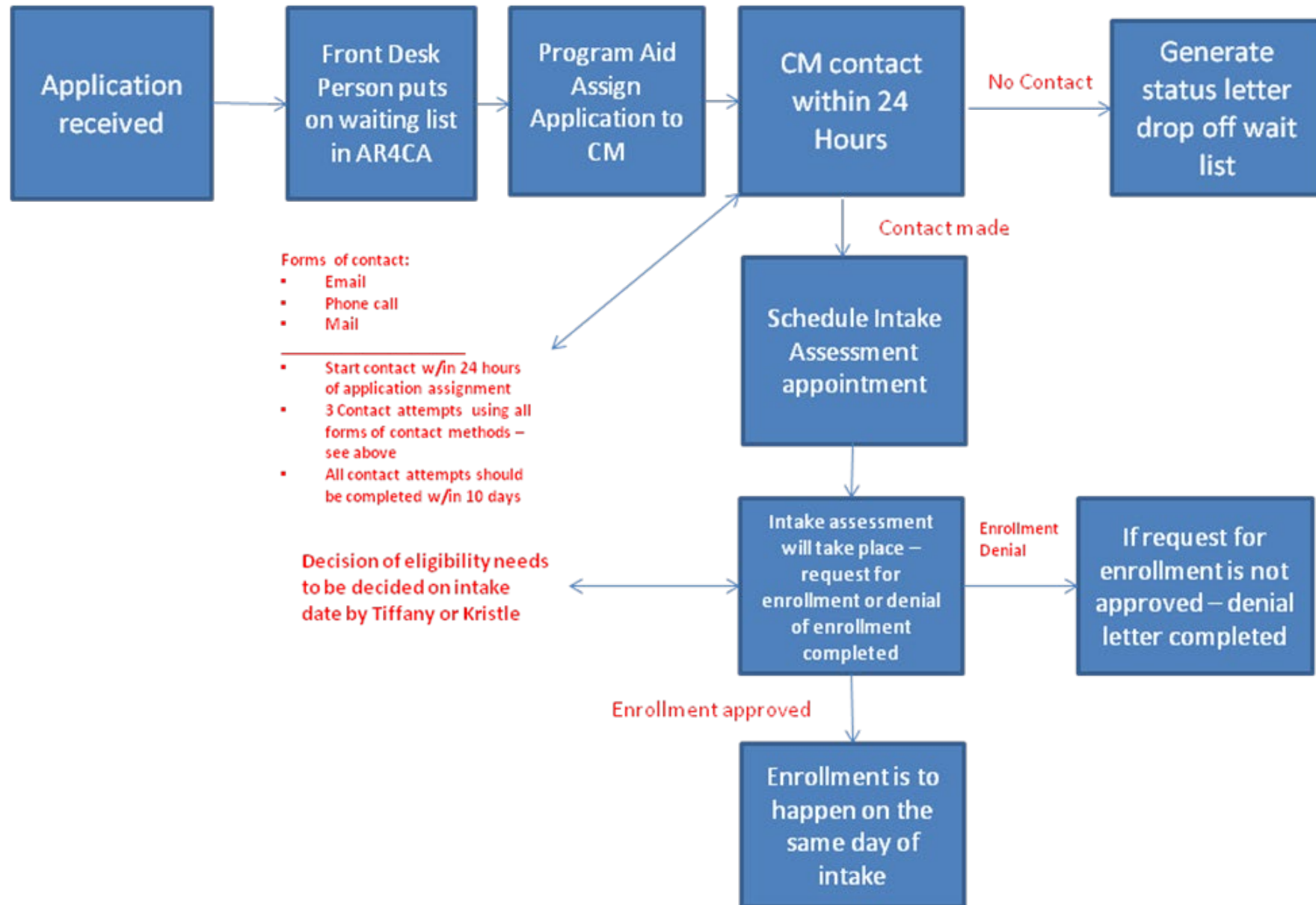
INCOME WORKSHEET

- This step is completed by the **Intake Specialist**.
- The head of household (applicant) name must be written in the top left hand corner.
- Beneath their name, write in the TOTAL number of people in the household (include everyone in the home, not just those individuals related to head of household by birth, marriage or adoption).
- The date of the application is to be written in the top right hand corner.
- Under the application date, write in the 90-day look back period which starts **the day before** the first contact with customer to gather information for intake.
- First contact is defined as the day that the applicant is contacted to bring in intake documents.

- **In column 1** write the names of **ALL household members related to the applicant by birth, marriage, or adoption.**
- **In column 2**, identify the relationship of the individual to the applicant (i.e., son, daughter, spouse, grandparent, etc). Non-related individuals in the home will be listed separately.
- **Column 3** is to be used to write in the dates that **ALL RELATED HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS** received income during the lookback period. If no income was received during any portion of the 90-day lookback period, write in “Zero Income”.
- If a member of the household is disabled or under 18 years of age, the money may be paid to another household member on that individual’s behalf. This income should be listed alongside the name of the person that the money is for. For example, the payee may be Jane Doe but the benefit is for John Doe. The income would be listed under John Doe in the financials tab.

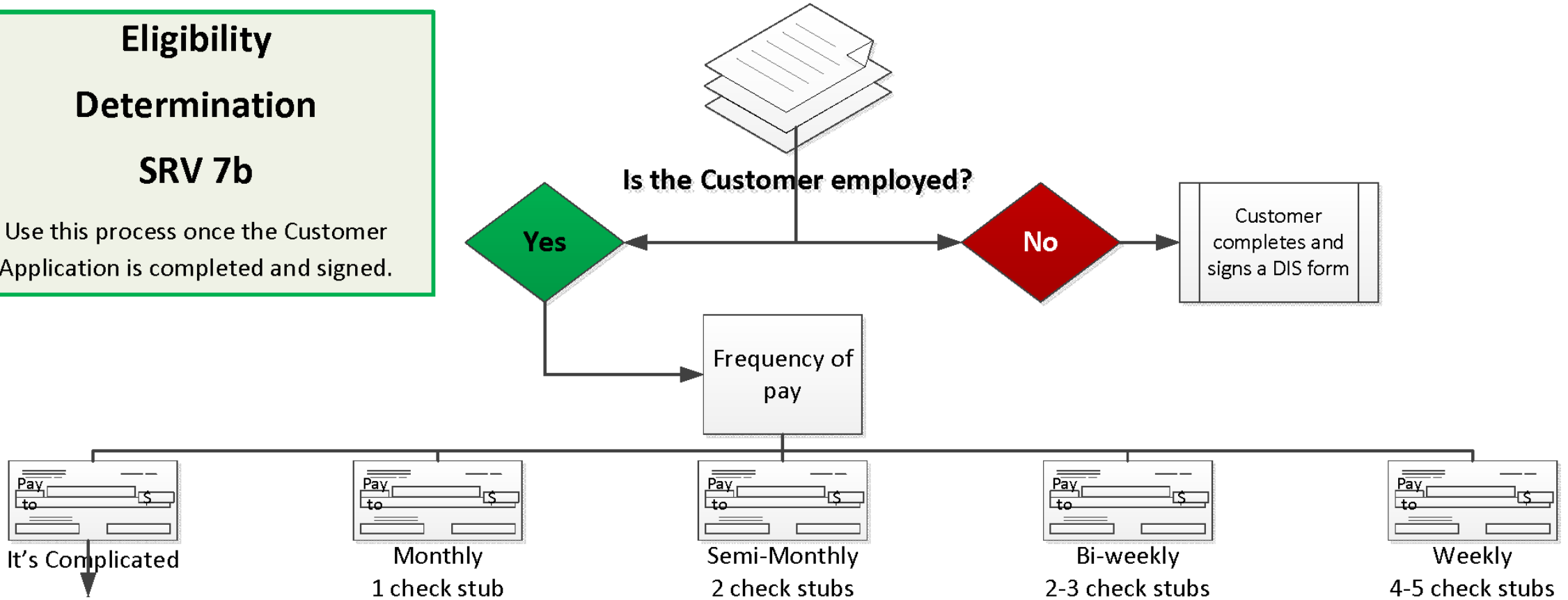
1. Name	2. Relationship to Head of Household	3. 90 Day Breakdown	4. Source	5. Employer name and address	6. Total amount received during lookback period
Sally Smith	Head of Household	8/1/2022-10/30/2022	Work First		
		8/1/2022-10/30/2022	Employment	Holiday Inn, 123 Lane, Anytown, NC	
David Smith	spouse	8/1/2022-10/30/2022	Unemployment		
Renee Smith	child	8/1/2022-10/30/2022	zero income		
				total earnings during lookback	
				Monthly Earnings (Total earnings divided by 3)	
				Annual Income (monthly earnings x12)	

Flow chart of Applications for CSBG



**Eligibility
Determination
SRV 7b**

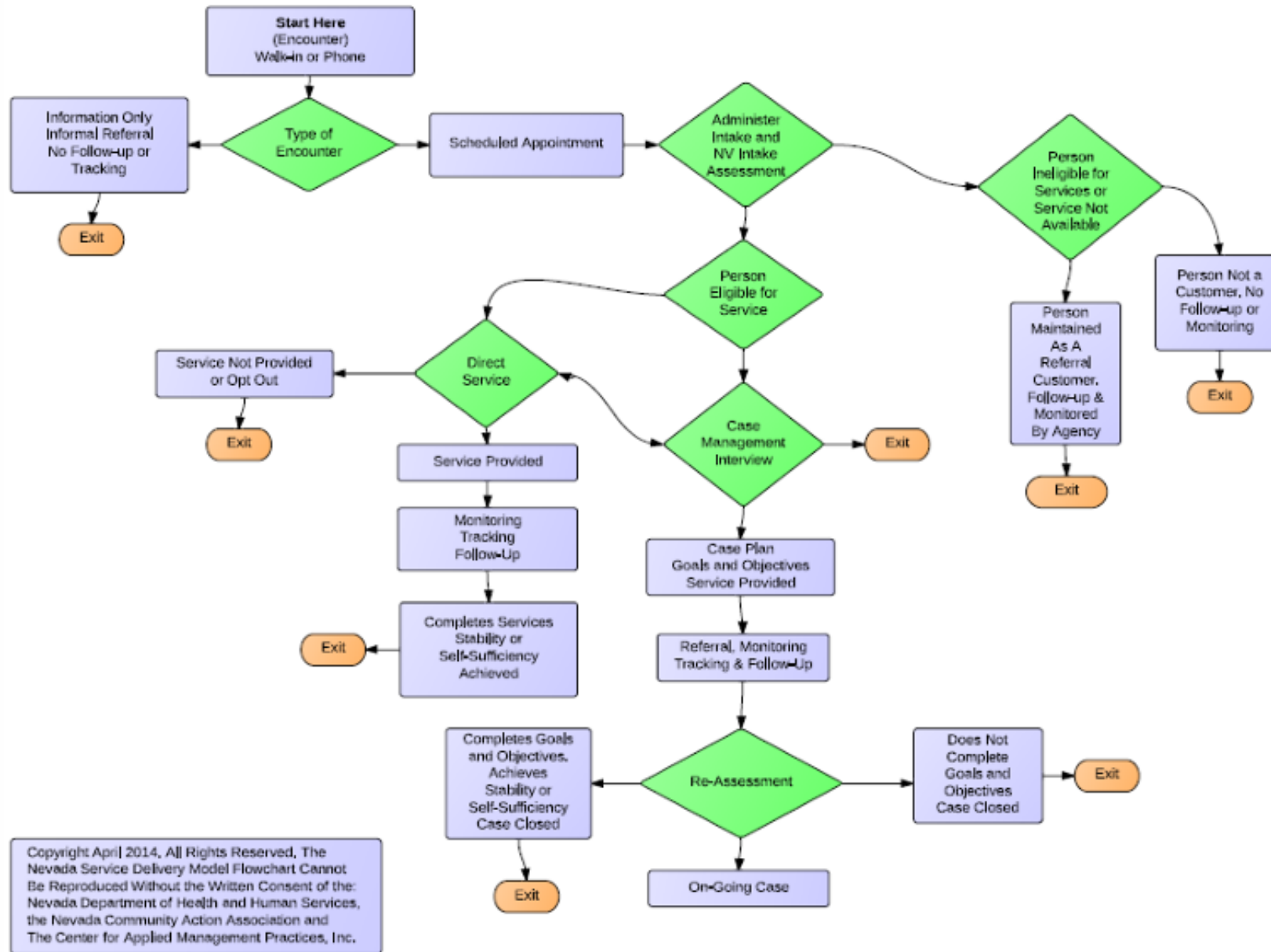
Use this process once the Customer Application is completed and signed.



Customer Life Cycle Tracking



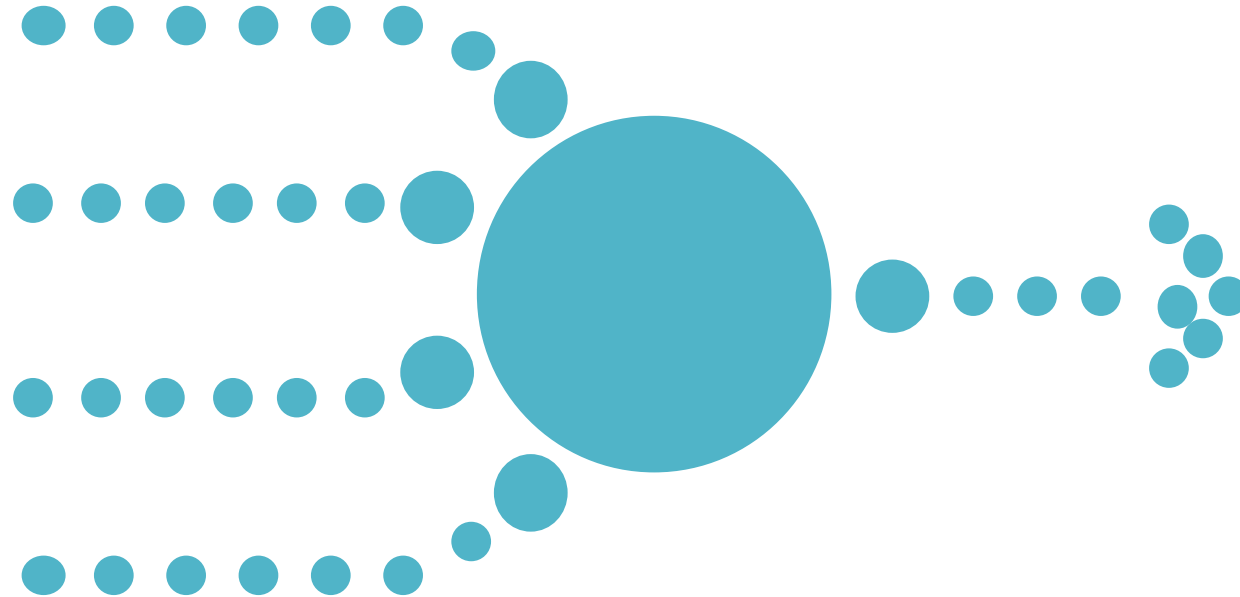
Appendix B-Nevada Service Delivery Model Flowchart



The Coach will complete the following steps when a customer is discharged for a positive reason.

- ❑ Complete the Quarterly Assessment to document the customer's income for a three(3) month period.
- ❑ Update the Action Plan to encourage the customer to continue activities that will help them reach their long-term goals. This updated plan will be given to the customer and a copy will be retained in the customer's casefile as a Discharge Plan.
- ❑ Complete a "Final Case Note" to document the reason for discharge.
- ❑ Send the customer a Letter of Successful Discharge recognizing the accomplishment and offer an appeal.
- ❑ Print required field from the database and place them in the customer's hard file. Close out the file in the database. Give the casefile to the Program Manager for review and program audits.

Connecting Services to Outcomes



Documenting Services

Before Saving the Service Entry, Verify:

- All required fields in the **Services tab** are fully completed
- The **service date matches the Action Plan service date**
- The service is correctly linked to the **appropriate customer goal or need**
- The **funding source is correctly identified**
- If the service is paid with **CSBG funds**:
 - The **purchase order (PO) number is entered**
 - The **service receipt date equals the check preparation date**
 - The service date is **NOT** the purchase order date

Supervisor / Quality Assurance Review (If Applicable):






- Service entry meets documentation standards
- Funding documentation is accurate
- No missing or conflicting dates

General Outcome Documentation & Reporting Requirements

- If a customer is enrolled and accomplishes an outcome, the outcome must be documented in the case file and reported.
- The Outcome Report Form and all supporting documentation must be submitted to the CSBG Manager or Program Director for approval.
- No outcome may be entered into the Database until it has been formally approved.

Key Outcome Validation Rules

All staff must adhere to the following rules when evaluating outcomes:

-  Without documentation, the outcome does not exist
-  Outcomes must not be entered into database until approved
-  All outcomes must align with an Action Plan goal
-  All outcomes must correlate with a documented service
-  All approved outcomes must be marked as “Complete” in the Action Plan

Early Head Start

Early Head Start programs usually require their own software to be used.

Early Head Start Program (Case Management/Family Goal Plan)

FNPI 2a The Number of children (0-5) who demonstrated improved emergent literacy skills.

FNPI 2b Number of children (0-5) who demonstrated skills for school readiness.

FNPI 2c The number of children and youth who demonstrated improved positive approaches toward learning, including improved attention skills.

FNPI 2c1 Number of children (ages 0-5) who demonstrated improved positive approaches toward learning, including improved attention skills.

FNPI 2d Number of children (ages 0-5) who are achieving at basic grade level (academic, social, and other school success skills).

FNPI 2d1 Early Childhood Education

FNPI 7a Number of individuals who achieved one or more outcomes in the identified National Performance Indicators in one or more domains.

It is imperative that you work with the directors of your educational programs to determine what services will be completed. Below is a list of services you can choose from.

Services with a red asterisk (*) are those that may be relevant to the Head Start program and may not be currently captured.

2a – Early Head Start

2cc – Home Visits

2k – School Supplies

7a – Case Management

7b – Eligibility Determinations

7c - Referrals

***5a** – Immunizations

***5b** – Physicals

***5c** – Developmental Delay Screening

***5d** Vision Screening

***5dd** – Child Dental Screenings/Exams

***5ee** – Child Dental Services (including emergency dental procedures)

Housing Assistance

Provides assistance to eligible low-income household for housing assistance.

Housing Assistance should be setup through Family Goal Plans.

Emergency Rental Assistance Application (at risk of being evicted)

Foreclosure Assistance Application

Rental Assistance

FNPI 4e - Number of individuals who avoided eviction.

FNPI 7a - Number of individuals who achieved one or more outcomes in the NPIs in one or more domains.

Foreclosure Assistance

FNPI 4f - Number of individuals who avoided foreclosure.

FNPI 7a - Number of individuals who achieved one or more outcomes in the NPIs in one or more domains.

Rental Assistance

SRV 4c Rent Payments (includes Emergency Rent Payments)

SRV 7a Case Management

SRV 7b Eligibility Determination

SRV 7c Referrals (if program is included in a Family Goal Plan/Case Management)

SRV 7o Mediation/Customer Advocacy Interventions (if program is included in a Family Goal Plan/Case Management)

Foreclosure Assistance

SRV 4e Mortgage Payments (includes Emergency Mortgage Payments)

SRV 7b Eligibility Determination

SRV 7c Referrals (if program is included in a Family Goal Plan/Case Management)

SRV 7o Mediation/Customer Advocacy Interventions (if program is included in a Family Goal Plan/Case Management)

Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs ROMA Case Management Workflow and Guide



ROMA	Step in ROMA Cycle	Case Work	SRVs/FNPIs	Timeframe
Assessment	Eligibility Determination	<p>Eligibility Intake entered into Customer software with a completed, signed and dated application. Collect 30-days prior income from the date of the signed application or a signed DIS. Using the income calculator, determine whether Customer is eligible for CSBG services. To ensure you calculate income correctly, see <i>Income Eligibility</i> and <i>Income Calculator</i> videos located here:</p> <p>https://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/community-affairs/videos.htm</p> <p>If YES, move to next step in ROMA Cycle</p> <p>If NO, provide Notice of Denial and Appeal Rights with referrals to service providers</p>	SRV 7b	1 st Appointment
	Self-Sufficiency Outcomes Matrix/ Self-Sufficiency Customer Questionnaire	<p>Based on the application, Customer responses at intake, and the completion of the Self-Sufficiency Customer Questionnaire, complete the Self-Sufficiency Outcomes Matrix</p> <p>Determine in what areas the Customer has fallen below the Prevention Line and document in case notes.</p>		1 st Appointment
	Case Management Screening Questions	<p>Complete Case Management Screening Questions with Customer</p> <p>Assess whether to enroll in case management or provide referrals to service providers</p> <p>Place completed form in file and include in case notes</p>		1 st Appointment
	Case Notes	<p>All case notes should tell the story of the Customer from intake through the end of service delivery and to achievement of TOP or case closure. If it's not written down, it didn't happen. Intake case notes should be the most extensive case notes explaining barriers, reason/need for services.</p>		Ongoing and upon completion of 90 consecutive days of income above 125% FPIG
<p>Is this Customer an Emergency Services Customer? Then provide the necessary services to alleviate the emergency.</p> <p><i>NOTE: Once the immediate emergency needs of the Customer are met, they may not be ready to sign a CM agreement. Plant a seed about CM and the services, then give them time to breathe and the space to once again feel safe, before addressing CM with them. Consider waiting 2-4 weeks after meeting there emergency need before contacting the Customer.</i></p>				
<p>Is the Customer a case management candidate?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If YES, move on to next step in ROMA Cycle. • If NO, provide emergency services to meet the needs of the Customer and close case file with referrals to service providers, if needed 				

If...Then...

Employment: CDL Track	If customer enrolls in CDL school	Then enroll customer to obtain vocational skills certificate	Select SRV 1a Select SRVs 2aa, 2bb (if providing) Select either FNPI 2h
	If customer enrolls in CDL school	Then enroll customer to obtain employment	Select from SRVs 1g-1q Select either FNPI 1b or 1e, based on living wage calculator/HH size
	If customer obtains employment	Then enroll customer to maintain employment for 90 days	Select from SRVs 1g-1q for further services provided Select either FNPI 1c or 1f

Employment – Domain 1	FNPI	SRVs
Has the customer signed a case management agreement and needs to obtain employment? MIT Living Wage Calculator: https://livingwage.mit.edu/		7a
Employment up to a living wage?	1b	1a-1q
If obtained a job, enter the start date and enroll to maintain the job for 90 days.	1c	
Employment at a living wage or higher?	1e	1a-1q
If obtained a job, enter the start date and enroll to maintain the job for 90 days.	1f	
Did the customer apply for assistance and already has a job?	1h	1a-1q
How are you assisting the customer to achieve an: <input type="checkbox"/> increase in salary <input type="checkbox"/> increase in hours worked <input type="checkbox"/> increase in employment benefits	1h.1 1h.2 1h.3	1a-1q

SRV 1g	Workshops	Do you have a partner where a customer can attend career counseling workshops?
SRV 1i	Coaching	Are you coaching the customer monthly in their job search? Synonyms for the word Coach: to counsel, mentor, show, guide, lead and tutor
SRV 1j	Resume Development	Search the internet for resume samples and work with the customer to find the best fit for their skills/experience
SRV 1k	Interview Skills Training	Consider using a virtual call or if in-person a cell camera to record the customer. Ask questions, record them and show them the video so they can see how they appear to the person asking the questions.
SRV 1l	Job Referrals	Do you have a current, accurate list of employers to refer customers to? If not, consider how to develop a list so customers with barriers to employment have a starting place with a referral to an organization your agency has built a relationship with.

Data Collection and Entry



SOPs on data
collection can help us
to know:

- Who we served
- How many people we served
- What services we provided
- What outcomes were achieved
- What resources were used
- What funds were expended

Sample Example Table of Contents for Data Collection & Management S.O.P.

Purpose

[Describe why this SOP exists]

Scope

[Who this applies to]

Definitions

[Optional key terms]

Roles & Responsibilities

[List key roles and duties]

Data Collection Process

[Step-by-step intake, service, outcome, discharge]

Data Quality Assurance

[Audits, reviews, corrections]

Data Security & Confidentiality

[Access, storage, privacy]

Reporting & Data Use

[Dashboards, leadership, board use]

Review & Updates

[How often updated]

Approval

Executive Director Signature: _____

Date: _____

<p>Financials and Benefits</p>	<p>From a CM Event, click on the Financials and Benefits tab, click on New Financials and Benefits.</p> <p>Fill in required fields and Save.</p>
<p>Financials and Benefits</p>	<p>Close the entered Financials and Benefits, and refresh the CM Event</p>
<p>Form and Income Eligibility Calculation</p>	<p>Login to the new system and click the Applicants tab.</p> <p>Find desired Applicant in the list and select.</p> <p>Click on "CM Event" and select desired Event.</p> <p>Click on "Budget"</p> <p>Income Eligibility is an automated calculation based on income in the poverty table. It appears as a notification in top tool bar.</p>

Budgets (related to CM Event only)	From a CM Event, click on the Budget tab. Click + New Budget Give the Budget a name. Enter optional fields. Save.
Savings	Login to the new system and click the Applicants tab. Find desired Applicant in the list and select. Click on "CM Event" and select desired Event. Click on "Savings" then "+ New Savings" Enter all required and optional fields. Click the Save button.

Without
consistency in
data collection
and reporting, the
data cannot be
trusted!





**No data,
no story!**

Data Is Vital

Every piece of information your agency collects, every detail entered, isn't just a checkbox on a form.

It's a vital part of the puzzle that allows us to tell a powerful story-the story of real lives changed.



Who Cares?

Shift the perspective from data is a burden to data is potential!



Who cares about Funding and Sustainability?

- We need to prove our impact to keep our doors open.
- Funders want concrete evidence their investment makes a difference.
- Accurate data empowers us to advocate for change.
- Policymakers listen when we show trends and significant needs.



Who cares about better policies?

- Accurate data empowers us to promote change and influence policy.
- Policymakers listen when we show trends and significant needs.



Who cares about celebrating success or program improvement?



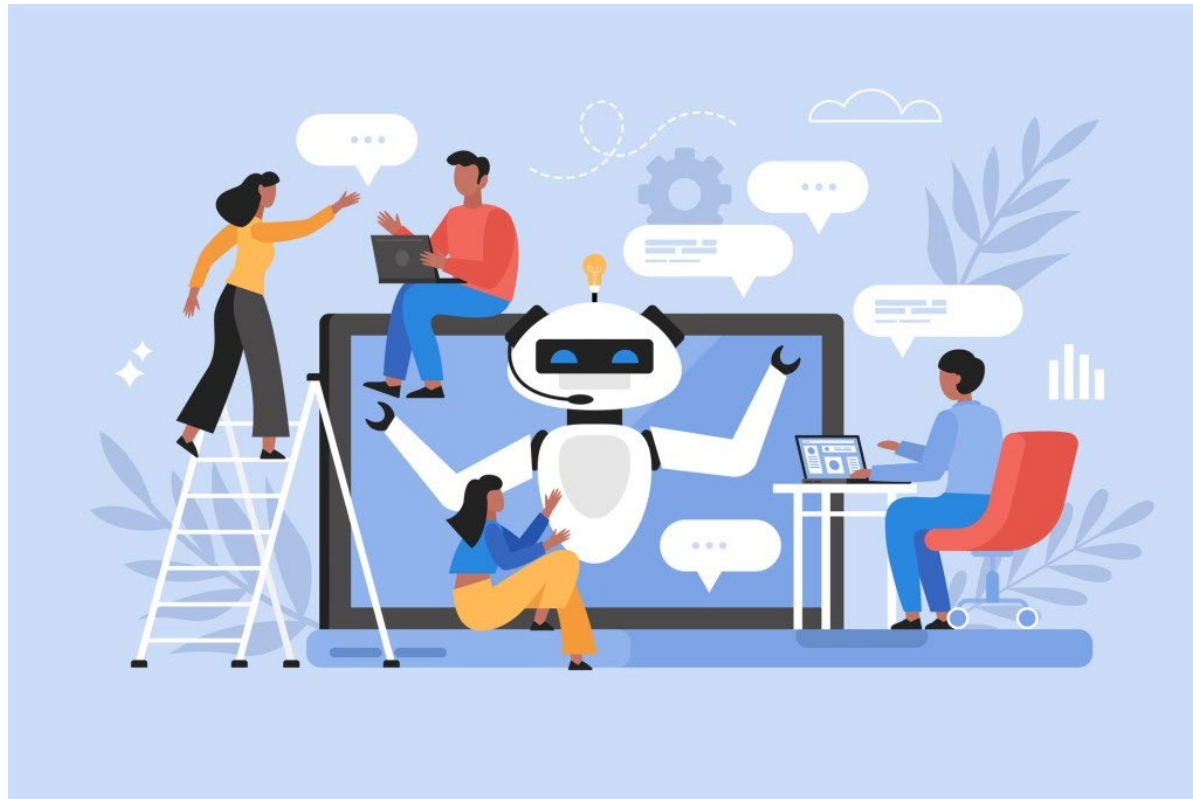
- Accurate data allows us to celebrate the incredible outcomes of our customers and the hard work of our staff. It allows us to truly understand the difference we're making.
- It helps us identify what's working well and where we can improve our services to better meet customer needs.

SOPS can make sure you have the right data in your cart!

- **Complete:** Fill in every relevant field. Missing info can create an incomplete story.
- **Accurate:** Double-check everything. One incorrect number can misrepresent impact.
- **Reliable:** Everyone understands definitions and enters data uniformly.
- **Timely:** Enter data as soon as possible. Current data is more relevant.



Using Artificial Intelligence



Why do we need SOPs for use of AI?



AI can be a helpful tool for many elements of our work, especially the analysis of data!



But because much of our data contains confidential client information, and because the results generated by AI are not always correct, creating SOPs for using AI is important.

Elements of an AI SOP Checklist

1. Purpose of Analysis (Required)

What question is this analysis intended to answer?

- What services led to what outcomes?
 - What are the demographics of our most successful customers (obtaining at least one outcome)?
 - What are the demographics of our least successful customers (obtaining no outcomes)?
 - What are the common themes from our customer satisfaction data?
 - What are the most identified needs from our community input survey?
 - Other:
-

2. Data Used (Required)

Dataset Name(s): _____

Time Period Covered: _____

Unit of Analysis:

- Head of Household demographics
- Household member demographics

- Services provided
- Outcomes achieved
- Qualitative Survey response
- Quantitative Survey responses
- Expenditures
- Other

3. Data Protection & De-Identification (Required)

- No names, addresses, SSNs, or DOBs were entered
- Identifiers were removed or replaced with random IDs
- De-Identified Data has been approved by a supervisor for use in AI

Describe de-identification steps

(brief): _____

4. AI Tool & Use (Required)

AI Tool Used (agency-approved):

Agency account Approved

external tool

How will AI be used (check all that apply):

- Trend analysis
- Identification of priority needs
- Data Cleaning
- Creation of narrative for reporting
- Creation of charts for reporting
- Other

5. Validation & Quality Control (Required)

- **to be completed after use of AI*

- Key findings verified against source data
- Results replicated using a second method or human reviewer
- All factual claims verified or removed by a human

- **Reviewer Name (if applicable):** _____
Date Reviewed: _____

6. Intended Use & Distribution

Used for:

- Internal staff use only
- Leadership / Board
- Monitoring or audit
- CNA or strategic planning
- External reporting (non-public)
- Public document
- Other

If external or public, confidentiality check completed? Yes N/A

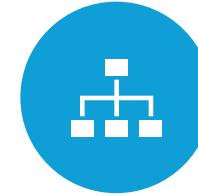
This sounds like a lot of work? What's in it for me?



Adapt and respond to crisis-hello, COVID!



Helps to delegate tasks!



Supports program expansion



Helps with succession planning



Reduces time spent on training



Frees up bandwidth for high level decision making



Reduces micromanaging



Next steps

Where do you see that you can create, or add to, standard operating procedures in your agency?



For more information

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