




EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY
Washington, D.C. 20503

ONDCP Circular: Performance Monitoring

September 9, 2021

TO: THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND ESTABLISHMENTS

FROM: REGINA M. LABELLE, ACTING DIRECTOR 

SUBJECT: PROGRAM AND PERFORMANCE AUDITS AND EVALUATIONS TO MONITOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL PROGRAM

1. **Purpose.** This circular provides guidance to National Drug Control Program agencies (NDCPA) on the use of program and performance audits and evaluations to monitor the implementation of the National Drug Control Program.
2. **Authority.** *The Substance Use-Disorder Prevention that Promotes Opioid Recovery and Treatment (SUPPORT) for Patients and Communities Act of 2018* (P.L. 115-271, dated October 24, 2018) provides (codified at 21 U.S.C. § 1703(d)(7)) that the Director of National Drug Control Policy may –

“(7) monitor implementation of the National Drug Control Program, including—

(A) conducting program and performance audits and evaluations; and

(B) requesting assistance from the Inspector General of the relevant agency in such audits and evaluations;”

3. **Definitions.** As used in this circular, -
 - a. **National Drug Control Program** means, pursuant to 21 U.S.C. § 1701(10), “programs, policies, and activities undertaken by National Drug Control Program agencies pursuant to the responsibilities of such agencies under the *National Drug Control Strategy (Strategy)*, including any activities involving supply reduction, demand reduction, or State, local, and Tribal affairs.”
 - b. **National Drug Control Program agency** means any agency designated by the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) Director as meeting the definition pursuant to 21 U.S.C. § 1701(11), as an agency (or bureau, office, independent agency, board, division, commission, subdivision, unit, or other component thereof) that is responsible for implementing any aspect of the *Strategy*, including any agency that receives Federal

funds to implement any aspect of the *Strategy*, but does not include any NDCPA that receives funds for drug control activity solely under the National Intelligence Program or the Joint Military Intelligence Program.

- c. **Bureau** means any component of an agency.
 - d. **Performance Review System (PRS) Report** describes the goals, objectives, and targets contained in the *Strategy* (as required by 21 U.S.C. § 1705(c)(1)).
 - e. **National Control Assessment.** The *National Drug Control Assessment (Assessment)* assesses each NDCPA's progress in achieving the *Strategy/PRS* goals and objectives for the most recently completed fiscal year (as required by 21 U.S.C. § 1705(g)).
 - f. **Performance Measurement System** (as identified in 21 U.S.C. § 1705(g)(3)(D)) includes, for the purposes of this circular, the goals, objectives, and targets reflected in the *Strategy* and the *PRS*, and any standardized output or outcome measure data reported by the NDCPA or bureau that helps describe the agency's or bureau's contribution to achieving a goal, objective, or target.
4. **Coverage.** The provisions of this circular apply to all NDCPAs in the Executive Branch as defined by ONDCP Circular, *Budget Formulation*, dated September 9, 2021, Section 4.b.
5. **Performance Audits and Evaluations.** The Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), within the Executive Office of the President, is responsible for coordinating and overseeing the implementation of national drug control policy, including the *Strategy*, across the federal government. ONDCP is also responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of national drug control policy efforts, both the *Strategy's* goals and objectives, as well as each NDCPA's program-level measures.

Performance audits and evaluations examine the efficiency and effectiveness of federal efforts, and provide an avenue for corrective action if the *PRS* and *Assessment* goals/objectives are not being met. As a normal course of business, ONDCP undertakes as necessary such reviews to NDCPA programs.

However, when the Director of ONDCP requires an independent assessment of NDCPA efforts, 21 U.S.C. § 1703(d)(7)(B) authorizes ONDCP to request the assistance of the Inspector General (IG) of the NDCPAs in conducting such audits and evaluations. Unlike in the past, when each NDCPA IG was required to perform an annual attestation concerning performance reporting methodology and unmet performance targets, this as-required assistance will vary in scope, dependent upon the issue.

6. **Requests for Assistance.** When a performance-related issue arises which requires NDCPA IG assistance, ONDCP will provide a written request to both the NDCPA head and the IG, informing them of the request. After an initial discussion on the issue, ONDCP will defer to the NDCPA IG to the level of review standard that the IG will undertake in support of ONDCP. After the review is complete, the IG will provide it to both the NDCPA and

ONDCP. ONDCP and the NDCPA will then work together to make the necessary programmatic adjustments, as well as any changes necessary to the *PRS* and *Assessment*.

7. **ONDCP Point of Contact.** The point of contact for all matters referenced in this circular is the Performance Budget Coordinator at performancebudgetcoordinator@ondcp.eop.gov.