

**2021 Overdose Data to Action**  
**Business Process Improvement Capacity Building and Technical Assistance Opportunity**  
**Frequently Asked Questions**

ASTHO, with support from CDC, is pleased to announce a capacity building and technical assistance (CBTA) opportunity to build state, territorial, and local health agency capacity around financial and administrative management quality and systems improvement to efficiently spend federal funding within CDC’s Overdose Data to Action (OD2A) award. This FAQ document provides additional guidance and information regarding this CBTA opportunity. Please review the document to learn more.

**How many individuals are required to participate in this project from each state, territory, or jurisdiction?**

Health agency staff should form and participate as a team. Team members should include key stakeholders invested in the improvement and success of the OD2A program from throughout the organization such as the OD2A principal investigator (PI), OD2A program staff, fiscal officer, grants and contracts representative, and performance improvement representative. We strongly recommend at least one finance or administrative staff member participate. Additionally, senior-level leadership buy-in can help facilitate the implementation of quality improvement efforts. Although it is not a requirement, jurisdictions should invite a member of senior departmental leadership (e.g., state health official, senior deputy, division director) to participate in the kickoff and final meetings.

**Are there any expectations or commitments to take into consideration prior to completing an application?**

In addition to attending calls, health agency teams will be encouraged to complete pre-work activities in preparation for the peer-to-peer learning convenings. Participants will also be required to develop an outline or framework for an agency implementation plan based on the solutions identified during the workshop and calls, with support from subject matter experts, ASTHO, and NACCHO.

**What is the expected time commitment by health agency teams over the seven-month time?**

Month	Activity	Time	Required stakeholder <i>(see next question for further details)</i>	Notes
November	Virtual project kick-off webinar	1.5 hours x 1 session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OD2A PI/Project Manager</li> <li>• Performance improvement staff</li> <li>• Fiscal and grants and contracts team</li> <li>• Member of senior leadership (not required, but encouraged)</li> </ul>	
December	Virtual 2-3 day process-mapping workshop	3.5 hours x 3 sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OD2A PI/PM</li> <li>• Performance improvement Staff</li> <li>• Fiscal and grants and contracts team</li> </ul>	This includes a review of the current process map and the development of a ‘future/ideal’-state process map.

November to April	Up to 6 individual virtual CBTA sessions	1 hour x 6 sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OD2A PI/PM</li> <li>• Performance improvement staff</li> <li>• Fiscal and grants and contracts team</li> </ul>	
November to April	Up to 5 virtual peer-to-peer learning convenings	1 hour x 5 convenings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OD2A PI/PM</li> <li>• Performance improvement staff</li> </ul>	
April	Virtual project close-out call	1.5 hours x 1 session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OD2A PI/PM</li> <li>• Performance improvement staff</li> <li>• Fiscal and grants and contracts team</li> <li>• Senior leader</li> </ul>	
November to April	Internal preparation and implementation activities	Up to 12-18 hours throughout the project period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OD2A PI/PM</li> <li>• Fiscal and grants and contracts team</li> <li>• Performance improvement staff</li> <li>• Senior leader</li> </ul>	This includes development of the agency implementation plan (or an outline/framework for the implementation plan).

**What are the benefits of participating in this opportunity?**

This is an opportunity to collaborate and engage with members of other teams within your agency to incorporate innovative ideas in your work, better align priorities and goals of all stakeholders, and improve flexibility of the organization related to the administrative and financial needs. This technical assistance opportunity will be tailored to your jurisdiction’s specific administrative needs. The project will benefit stakeholders through increased efficiency, improved customer satisfaction, and improved community health.

The intended outcomes for OD2A PI/PMs are as follows:

- Identification of strategies to manage programmatic spending during and despite of public health emergencies.
- Identification of priorities and solutions to effectively utilize and spenddown federal funds including but not limited to the OD2A grants.
- Through individualized technical assistance, identification of ways to improve the process associated with causing delays in program administration and spenddown of funds.
- Opportunity to build, maintain, strengthen, and sustain relationships and communication with cross-cutting teams including the financial/budget office at health agency.
- Identification and incorporation of quality improvement techniques in processes to resolve inefficiencies and improve productivity and effectiveness of cross-collaborative work.

- Opportunity to collaborate, engage and learn from peers across agencies and jurisdictions who have experienced and overcome similar challenges.

Performance Improvement, Finance or Grants Staff will:

- Identify administrative and financial process inefficiencies through process mapping and interactive workshops, tailored to your jurisdiction's specific needs.
- Reduce process cycle times and understand the value of improving administrative and financial processes.
- Gain access to guidance materials, resources, and tools to improve financial and administrative systems and policies, created with support of subject matter experts, ASTHO, NACCHO, and CDC.
- Leverage and strengthen relationships and communication between in house performance improvement/finance/grants experts and programmatic staff
- Empower each other to sustain a culture of quality and continuous improvement, even after the project year concludes.

**My jurisdiction already has its financial service center, grants management and contract management processes mapped. Would this decrease some of the expected time commitment from the stakeholders during the 2-3-day process mapping workshops?**

This will vary from one jurisdiction to another. Here is a breakdown of expectations for participants:

- OD2A PI/program managers and performance improvement Staff will be expected to attend all calls and virtual sessions.
- Fiscal and grants and contract staff will be expected to attend the kickoff call, process mapping workshop, and if possible, majority of the individual and group calls to provide insight into financial and contracting processes. Additionally, it would be beneficial for the fiscal/grants and contract staff to participate in the internal implementation and preparation activities as needed.
- A member of senior departmental leadership will be encouraged to attend the kick-off or close-out call but will mainly be involved in the internal preparation and implementation activities as needed. Senior leaders are welcome to join any of the calls and sessions.

**Who is eligible to apply for this opportunity?**

All OD2A recipients are eligible to apply.

**How do applicants apply for this opportunity?**

Use this [form](#) to complete the application by **11:59 p.m. EST on September 30**. If you are interested in reviewing the questions prior to completing the form, [please review a pdf version here](#). Incomplete applications or applications received after the deadline will not be considered. If you are having issues accessing the online application or have questions regarding the project, please contact Jennifer Farfalla ([od2a@astho.org](mailto:od2a@astho.org)). Additionally, please note that ASTHO will prioritize selections based on the applicant's needs.

**Application Timeline**

- **Request for applications released:** August 11, 2021
- **Application submission deadline:** September 30, 2021
- **Project period:** November 2021 – April 2022
- **Evaluations due:** May 2022

**What documentation must be included in the application?**

Participation in this opportunity is open to all OD2A recipients interested in improving their capacity around financial and administrative management systems. The application package consists of the following: statement of interest, indication of organizational capacity and readiness, and letter of support from health agency leadership.

**If a jurisdiction is not selected to participate in this project, is any other support available?**

As a part of this project, ASTHO is committed to providing resources for jurisdictions to pursue similar activities on an individual basis. Examples of these resources include guidance documents, job-aids, reports, templates, and/or issue briefs by subject matter experts and participating sites.

**Will the final evaluation report be made public to all OD2A recipients regardless of participation?**

Yes, a summary report of lessons learned, and best practices will be shared with all OD2A recipients.

**Many factors inhibiting our ability to effectively spend federal funds are determined by procedures and decisions of state government at levels well above the health agency. Will this opportunity help us overcome some of those structural difficulties?**

This is a common challenge that many states, territories, and local health agencies experience with business process improvement. The exercise of process-mapping alone often surfaces many issues and leads to a focus on internal processes where simple solutions (e.g., job aids/error proof forms/leveraging technology) can be created to reduce errors, rework, and frustration while improving internal cycle time. This project will also help you isolate and communicate external bottlenecks through the use of data and performance monitoring. Essentially, this opportunity will aid in staff growth and development in continuous improvement.