



NATIONAL ASSESSMENT CENTER ASSOCIATION

Pathways to Excellence

This approach to excellence follows similar approaches including that used by Community Action Agencies and other Baldrige Award application methodologies. The tiered approach allows Assessment Center to enter the pathway beginning with an entry-level or “commitment” level. Levels progress and require more intensive engagement with the Assessment Center Framework. Successful completion of levels requires the completion of requirements of previous level with the final level recognized as a Center for Excellence. An Assessment Center’s engagement and enrollment in the Pathways to Excellence is voluntary. Agencies completing each level will receive formal recognition at annual NAC Conference if they have completed the level prior to January 1st of the previous year.

Center of Excellence Process

The Center of Excellence pre-visit and site visit process is intended to provide a systematic review of Assessment Center strengths and partnerships as well as identify the areas where practice can be improved. For organizational purposes, observations are groups in accordance with the core components and guiding principles. Please note that the core components are interrelated and may, therefore, be relevant under multiple observations or interviews.

Step One: Application - Application Fee \$500 (nonrefundable)

- Application form
- Self- Assessment: All self-assessment core components must score within implementation or sustainment phases (majority of the benchmarks are rated as a Formal Policy and Practice).
 - Change Plans
- Submission of:
 - Policies and Procedures
 - Staff training manual/process
 - Organizing documents
 - Current board or advisory members
 - Revenue vs Expenditure for prior year
 - Sources of funding
 - MOUs or agreements establishing single point of contact
 - MOUs or agreements with community providers
 - Screening and Assessment tool inventory
 - One-year of quarterly reports (ACORN) and last annual report provided to community/stakeholders
 - Summary results of youth and family feedback surveys if not included in reports

Step Two: Pre-Visit Process - 50% of cost due upon application approval

- Document review
- De-identified data set for case file review
- (#) of case files reviews
- Stakeholder Interviews
 - Youth and Family Members
 - Single Point of Contact Stakeholders (referral)
 - Law Enforcement
 - Courts
 - Schools
 - Child Welfare

Step Three: On-site Process - 50% of cost due one month prior to site visit

- Tour of facility(ies)
- Randomized file review
- On-site Interviews
 - Youth and Families
 - Staff

- Collaborative partners
- Advisory/Governance Board Members

Step Four: Review Committee Decision (vote) and Scorecard

- Self-Assessment
 - Benchmarks scores are verified by committee members during site visit, data, and case file review.
- Consensus Vote

Step Five: Final Report

- Center of Excellence Approval
 - Final Report
 - Overview of process and recommendation(s) from review committee
 - Schedule a recognition "event"
- Center of Excellence Denial
 - Final Report
 - Overview of process as well as concerns and recommendations from review committee
 - If appropriate, timeframe to respond to recommendations

Step Six: Ongoing Certification

- Ongoing submission of ACORN to the National Assessment Center Association