

Connecticut General Assembly
Appropriations Committee

Results-Based Accountability Agency Guidelines: Report Card Development

This year, several agencies are requested to develop a results-based accountability (RBA) report card for a jobs-related program selected by the Appropriations Committee. This checklist is intended to provide a quick reference of the necessary steps in the development and content of these report cards. Additional resource materials will be provided for the RBA forums in January 2012 (at which the agency and the Appropriations Committee will have a discussion about the selected program based on the report card submitted) and the regular budget hearings in February 2012 (at which all agencies are expected to respond to the eight standard RBA questions for any programs discussed)¹.

Many agencies developed a report card for a highlighted program in 2010 and 2011. These agencies are requested to update the information in the highlighted report card(s). (See the Appropriation Committee's RBA web page for the highlighted programs for 2010 and 2011.) All report cards submitted, including those being updated from prior years, should use Revision 4 of the Appropriations Committee's RBA Report Card template, dated 10/17/11. The template requires that you have each measure in a separate column and that the font size be at least Arial 10 point.

For agencies that developed a report card in 2010 or 2011, the following steps should be followed:

1. Review any technical feedback on the report card received from the Office of Fiscal Analysis (OFA)/Charter Oak Group (COG) team, and determine whether any changes should be made to the report card based upon this feedback.
2. Gather/update/enhance the data presented in the report card with the most recent data.
3. Review the updated data, making any changes in the diagnosis (story behind the baseline) and proposed actions. Be sure to include actions to mitigate the effect of budget cuts; include low-cost or no-cost actions or reallocation of existing agency resources.
4. Submit the updated report card using Revision 4 of the report card template to the Appropriations Committee through Susan Keane by November 22 and let her know if you want the OFA/COG team to do a review and provide feedback.
5. Review the technical feedback from the OFA/COG team and make any necessary adjustments.
6. Provide the final updated report card to the Appropriations Committee through Susan Keane by December 15.

¹ This document and all other RBA resource materials for state agencies are available on the Appropriations Committee's RBA web page: <http://www.cga.ct.gov/app/rba/>

The process for developing the 2012 report card for the newly selected jobs program follows. Please remember that members of the OFA/COG team are available for technical assistance at all stages of this process.

1. Identify members of the agency staff who should have input into the report card for the selected program. This should include staff associated with the program itself, but may also include other budget, data analysis, and policy staff. Although program staff should be involved in developing the report card, the executive leadership of the agency is ultimately responsible for the report card and should be prepared to present and discuss the report card.
2. Describe how the program contributes to the result listed in the template: All Connecticut working age residents have jobs that provide financial self-sufficiency.
3. List the actual amount of state, federal, and other funding, as well as total funding, for the program in SFY 11; list the estimated amount of state, federal, and other funding, as well as total funding, for the program in SFY 12.
4. Identify the partners that have an important role to play in improving the program or leveraging the program's contribution to the result.
5. Present no more than one important "How Much" measure, a measure that shows how many customers you have served or services you have delivered.
6. Present one or two important "How Well" measures, measures that show how well your agency is operating the program.
7. Present one or two important "better off" measures, measures that show whether customers are better off after receiving program services or as a result of program activity.
8. For each measure, provide a brief narrative (in the space allowed in the report card template) explaining the story behind the baseline. This should focus on your diagnosis of why performance is where it is for the measure. You should also explain any problems with the data. Do not merely describe what the chart shows unless there is a need to clarify something.
9. Using one of the arrows, indicate whether for each measure the trend is going in the right direction ▲ or the wrong direction ▼, or if the trend is flat or there is no trend ◀▶.
10. In the last column of the report card, identify a small number of actions you will take to improve program's performance or mitigate the effect of budget cuts on your program; include low-cost or no-cost actions or reallocation of existing agency resources.
11. Use the Data Development Agenda in the last column to list new or improved data that you intend to develop for any of your existing measures or for new measures that are needed.
12. Submit the report card to Appropriations Committee through Susan Keane by November 22 so that the OFA/COG team can do a review and provide feedback.
13. Review the technical feedback from the OFA/COG team and make necessary adjustments.
14. Provide the final report card for the newly selected program to the Appropriations Committee through Susan Keane by December 15.