



# ADMINISTRATIVE CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED STATES

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## Information Interchange Bulletin No. 027

# Government Performance and Results Act Basics

## What is GPRA?

The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), as amended by the GPRA Modernization Act of 2010, requires federal agencies to set goals, evaluate their programs, and assess their performance. Its primary purpose is to increase the federal government's ability to address public needs and improve the effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability of federal programs. ([5 U.S.C. § 306](#); [31 U.S.C. §§ 1105, 1115–1125, 3515, 9703–9704](#); [39 U.S.C. § 2810–2805](#)).

## What agencies does GPRA cover?

With a few exceptions, GPRA applies to all federal entities defined as an “executive agency” by [5 U.S.C. § 105](#). This includes cabinet departments, independent agencies, and government corporations. GPRA also applies to the U.S. Postal Service.

## What does GPRA require?

Broadly, GPRA requirements and guidance fall into four categories.

### Establishing Performance Goals

Each agency must develop and regularly update a strategic plan for its program activities. In doing so, agencies should consult with Congress and stakeholders ([5 U.S.C. § 306](#)). Additionally, agencies with statutorily mandated Chief Financial Officers (CFO Act agencies) must specify performance goals that are high-priority and establish quarterly targets for their performance ([31 U.S.C. §§ 901, 1120](#)).

### Increasing Agency Accountability

Each year, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) reviews whether agencies have met their performance goals. If they have not, the head of the agency must submit a performance improvement plan to OMB and designate a senior official to oversee performance improvement. If the agency fails to meet its goals for two consecutive years, the head of the agency must inform Congress. If the agency fails to meet its goals for three consecutive years, the Director of OMB must submit recommendations to Congress on actions that can be taken to improve performance ([31 U.S.C. § 1116](#)).

### Designating Leaders Responsible for Performance

A Performance Improvement Council assists OMB with resolving government-wide and cross-cutting performance issues ([31 U.S.C. § 1124](#)). Additionally, within each agency, two senior executive officials assist with improving performance: (1) each agency's deputy head or equivalent is the designated Chief Operating Officer (COO) and senior leader responsible for performance management, including carrying out the provisions of GPRA; (2) each agency must designate a Performance Improvement Officer to assist the agency head and COO with performance management ([31 U.S.C. §§ 1123–1124](#)). CFO Act agencies also must identify an agency official responsible for the performance of each high-priority goal ([31 U.S.C. § 1120](#)).

### Providing Information to the Public

Agencies must post their performance and strategic plans and related updates on a public website ([5 U.S.C. § 306](#); [31 U.S.C. §§ 1115-16](#)). Additionally, OMB must establish a [website \(performance.gov\)](#) that includes information on each agency's program performance and strategic goals ([31 U.S.C. § 1122](#)).

### Additional Resources

[Performance.gov](#)

[Government Performance and Results Act](#), ACUS Admin. Procedure Sourcebook [ACUS Rec. 2013-7](#), *GPRA Modernization Act of 2010: Examining Constraints To and Providing Tools For, Cross-Agency Collaboration*

GAO, [Managing For Results: Further Progress Made in Implementing the GPRA Modernization Act, but Additional Actions Needed to Address Pressing Governance Challenges](#) (2017)