**Accreditation Open Forum**
**October 21, 2025**
**"Preparing for a Successful Evaluation"**
**Questions and Answers**

**Do you review every practice at the evaluation?**
During an initial evaluation, the team reviews all applicable practices. For re-accreditation, the team reviews one-third of the practices in each applicable chapter. Because you will not know which practices will be selected, you should still be prepared for all practices to be reviewed.

**Is the evaluation one day or multiple days? How many?**
Initial evaluations last three days. The team usually travels on Monday and departs on Thursday. The opening meeting is typically held on Tuesday morning, with evaluations taking place for the remainder of the day and all day Wednesday, and the exit meeting is held on Thursday morning. The evaluation team then departs.

**How many evaluators typically attend?**
Most evaluations include three evaluators plus APWA staff. If the agency has fewer chapters, there may be only two evaluators. We only bring the number of evaluators needed for the work that can reasonably be completed in two and a half days.

**Is the tour usually on the first day before practice reviews?**
Yes, a tour is part of the opening meeting. Along with introductions and a presentation from your agency, the team will also review Chapter 1 during that time.

**If SharePoint causes problems with links, how do other agencies share documents?**
External website links are welcome. Internal SharePoint or intranet links may not work outside your network. Uploading documents directly into the software is the best way to avoid access issues.

**Do we pay for travel and lodging, or does APWA? Do we make arrangements or reimburse?**
The agency covers the evaluation team's travel costs. We recommend budgeting between $2,500 and $5,000. APWA often coordinates travel logistics, and the agency usually books hotel rooms. If you prefer, APWA can coordinate both travel and lodging. Within 60 days of the site visit, APWA staff will send you the invoice for all reimbursable expenses.

**Will we be expected to coordinate travel from the airport to my agency?**
APWA staff typically rents a car for the evaluation team; however, if your agency would like to handle ground transportation, please discuss that with your APWA staff liaison.

**If Council approved a policy but no one signed it, can we submit the Council approval as the signature?**
Yes, you may submit the Council's approval, provided the policy was formally adopted through your governing body's standard process. This means the approval should be documented as an official action, such as a resolution, ordinance, or whatever method your governing body uses to formally adopt policies.

**Can you explain a typical accreditation timeline, such as one year out or six months out?**
After you submit your application, your agency has three years to prepare for the evaluation. During that time, APWA staff will stay in contact, and you will receive access to the Model Practice Library to help guide your work. During the first six months, most agencies begin by organizing their team, assigning chapter leads, and building an internal schedule. The evaluation is usually scheduled after two years have passed, although it can be scheduled earlier if your agency is ready ahead of time. A peer review should be planned for six to eight months before the evaluation, which gives you time to make any needed improvements based on the feedback.

**How are questions per chapter gathered? Is there a place in the APWA portal for them?**
Evaluators use their own side of the agency's software portal to track their review. During the evaluation, they make notes and assign ratings for each practice. These notes, along with the ratings, are compiled into a daily report. The APWA staff liaison, or the lead evaluator if APWA staff is not present, can generate and send this report to the agency as needed, typically once per day. This allows the agency to see where additional information or clarification is requested for each chapter.

**Do evaluators review practices before the meetings?**
The evaluators make every effort to review practices before the evaluation begins, no matter what the format.

**Do we need to provide office space for evaluators?**
Yes, please plan to provide two or three rooms for interviews during the evaluation.

**How do we begin the process to apply?**
Contact APWA staff at accreditation@apwa.org or use the application packet available on the website here.