

Home Visiting Coordination Considerations for Action Plan Development

The first Action Plan is intended to help counties consider what action steps need to be taken to develop a comprehensive action plan. While some counties will address a subset of goals and others will address all of them (see Goals in Exhibit A, Attachment 1, and Exhibit A, Attachment 2.), counties are not expected to address all goals relevant to their stage of coordination immediately.

The Local Assistance Agreements (LAA) describe four broad goals for coordination (see Exhibit A, Attachment 2). All counties are required to carry out goals A (build or strengthen the countywide vision) and B (determine the scope and effectiveness of existing services). Goals C and D are relevant to counties further along the coordination continuum.

A first step in achieving any of the goals must be identifying existing and potential community partners who provide critical services to support children and families, and identifying and prioritizing families who could benefit from home visiting but are not already being served. The LAA Exhibit A, Attachment 2 (page 3 of 5) describes these activities as elements of the environmental scan to develop a shared understanding of the effects of COVID-19 on families and communities. The scan also can help counties understand the impact of COVID-19 on the home visiting infrastructure.

How Do We Carry Out an Environmental Scan?

F5CA recommends the following components and steps to carry out the environmental scan:

1. Identify existing and potential community partners who provide critical services to support children and families
 - a. Begin with a table listing each current or potential partner. Start simple but think broadly. Partners might include organizations related to physical health, behavioral health, child welfare, family support, early care and education, public transportation, and social services. You also might want to consider local businesses or community supports (e.g., food banks, shelters, etc.)
 - b. Next to the name of each organization, list key individuals or contact information (if known) for each potential or current partner.
 - c. Then add the general section sector, such as education, childcare, child welfare, housing, etc. for each potential or current partner.
 - d. Finally, list any current or past involvement with home visiting activities of that potential or current partner. This could include participation on a Community Advisory Board, any current or past funding of home visiting services, or a referral partner.

- e. Consider the mix of federal, state, and local funding sources for home visiting in the county. If there are funding organizations or sources that are not described above, add these to the table.
2. Use existing data to identify and prioritize families who would benefit from home visiting services to overcome the impacts of the crisis and identify and collect additional data as needed.
 - a. Start with existing data required by the Departments of Public Health and Social Services, and the F5CA Annual Report. Look for additional data collected by home visiting programs and program partners about children and families. Ideally, other agencies within your county also have the data and you can begin reviewing the data together. If not, collecting these data may become a step in the Action Plan.
 - b. As you and your partners review the data, answer questions such as:
 - Who are the expectant families and families with young children in the county? What are their needs?
 - How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the needs of families and how services are delivered?

What Should the Action Plan Include?



Counties are required to submit two action plans within a 5–7-month period (see LAA Tasks 2.A.1 and 2.A.2.). The first action plan is due December 31, 2020 (or no later than February 19, 2021, if an extension is requested), and the update is due July 31, 2021.

For counties at the initial stages of coordination, the initial Action Plan simply may be action steps to carry out some or all of the Environmental Scan activities. The July 31 Action Plan update will reflect priorities identified from carrying out action steps in the first Action Plan.

Counties further along the coordination continuum that have completed an Environmental Scan, updated it based on COVID-19 impacts, and identified priorities within relevant HVC goals may provide a more comprehensive first Action Plan. As a result, July 31 updates to the Action Plan may be minor.

Counties between these two extremes should complete a first Action Plan that reflects where they are on the continuum of coordination and lays the groundwork for taking next steps (e.g., updating or expanding the scope of the Environmental Scan based on COVID-19 impacts and/or identifying priorities within relevant HVC goals), with the knowledge the July 31 Action Plan update will include what you learn from carrying out the first Action Plan.