



***Environmental Information Quality Policy
and
Environmental Information Quality Procedure
Frequently Asked Questions***

Whom do these directives apply to?

These are overarching Quality Directives for the Agency's Quality Program. These requirements apply to EPA organizations' environmental information collection, production, evaluation, and use. EPA organizations include EPA Program Offices, Regions, and their sub-organizations. The directives apply to all Agency employees responsible for environmental information operations.

Is there applicability to non-EPA organizations?

These directives will be applied to non-EPA organizations performing work by or for EPA and in support of EPA's mission or national program priorities as defined by and in accordance with federal laws, regulations, extramural agreements, and if performing work on a voluntary basis under agreement with EPA.

When applicable, these directives will be applied to non-EPA organizations as described in the current versions of: the EPA organizations' Quality Management Plan (QMP) that is sponsoring the work, EPA or the [Quality Management Plan Standard](#), and/or [Quality Assurance Project Plan Standard](#).

What is the purpose?

These directives reaffirm and update the structure and processes for the EPA Quality Program which is a comprehensive and coordinated approach for the quality of EPA's environmental information and technology programs.

Why does EPA have Environmental Information Quality Directives?

The directives define and describe management principles and responsibilities for ensuring that EPA environmental information and technology operations products and services meet Agency quality-related requirements, are of known and documented quality, scientifically valid, legally defensible, and are appropriate for their intended use in support of EPA's mission to protect human health and the environment.

The goal of the Agency-wide Quality Program is to ensure that decisions are supported by the type and quality of environmental information needed and expected for their intended use.

When do the directives go into effect?



The Directives are in effect upon signature by the EPA Deputy Assistant Administrator for Environmental Information and Chief Information Officer. Changes reflected in the Quality Directives that are not currently included in an organization's approved Quality Management Plan (s) and/or Quality Assurance Project Plan(s) will be required to be incorporated during the next revision and approval of those documents.

How do I implement these directives?

Each EPA Program and Regional Office develops and implements its own individual Quality Management Plan which supports the EPA Quality Program. The EPA organization's [Quality Assurance Manager](#) (QAM) in coordination with their leadership is responsible for implementation of the Quality Directives. The QAM also serves as a central point of contact for guidance and technical support to state, local and tribal organizations, and citizens.

Why is there both an overarching Policy and a Procedure?

There is an overarching Policy and Procedure because there are four types of information technology (IT) and information management (IM) governance documents each with a purpose.

1. A CIO Policy is a high-level statement of principles that defines a course of action for a specific purpose and establishes broad requirements that govern EPA's decision-making.
2. A CIO Procedure is a series of specified actions or discrete steps that establish a method or process to implement an EPA policy.

The other two types of documents are Standards, which are technical requirements, and Guidance, which is a tool.

Are these directives in addition to existing quality requirements?

The current versions of the [Environmental Information Quality Policy](#) and [Environmental Information Quality Procedure](#) replace the existing CIO 2105.0, *Policy and Program Requirements for the Mandatory Agency-Wide Quality System* and CIO 2105-P-01-0, *EPA Quality Manual for Environmental Programs* with select content from the superseded CIO 2106, *Quality Policy and Procedure*. To obtain copies of these superseded documents please access the [QA Community SharePoint site](#).

Why does the format of these directives differ from the past versions?

These directives are written in the Office of Mission Support IT/IM directives template.

What's new in the directives?



1. Includes that the directives are consistent with American National Standard "*Specifications and Guidelines for Quality Systems for Environmental Data Collection and Environmental Technology Programs.*" (ASQ/ANSI E4-2014)
2. Uses the term Environmental Information, which includes Environmental Data.
3. Updates citations and uses the language "in the current version of" to accommodate future changes.
4. Reflects current roles and responsibilities of EPA organizational structures.
5. Identifies EPA organization annual reporting requirements.
6. Includes an annual certification by Assistant Administrators and Regional Administrators.
7. Incorporates the "*Guidelines for Ensuring and Maximizing the Quality, Objectivity, Utility and Integrity of Information Disseminated by the Environmental Protection Agency*" ([IQGs or Information Quality Guidelines](#))

What's been removed from the directives?

Substance Abuse Testing for EPA personnel has been removed from coverage under the Quality Program which the Department of Health and Human Services oversees.

Are there any agency documents or training intended to assist in meeting these directives?

Communication documents consist of: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), memorandum from the EPA Deputy Assistant Administrator for Environmental Information and Chief Information Officer to the Associate Administrators and Regional Administrators, one-page information sheet, desk statement, and updates to the Senior Information Office Bulletin and Administrative Updates. Also, Train the Trainer slides will be provided to Quality Assurance Managers (QAMs). It is the QAM's responsibility to provide organization-specific training.