



EPA Quality Assurance Field Activities Procedure

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Office of Mission Support, Office of Records, Administrative Systems and eDiscovery, Enterprise Quality Management Division (EQMD) has revised the EPA Quality Assurance Field Activities Procedure (QAFAP) after completing the five-year review and comment process. The Procedure was signed by the Chief Information Officer (CIO) on **July 01, 2025**. The Procedure has been posted on the EPA Quality Directives [website](#).

All EPA Regions, National Program Offices with an approved Quality Management Plan and the Office of Research and Development participated in the development of this revision. This Procedure was reviewed and updated based on the five-year review cycle and underwent major updates. Some changes included updating internal and external links, reorganizing parts of sections for clarity, incorporating records digitization information and applicable policies/procedures, better defining field activities and field groups, elaborating on the authority and formatting/grammatical updates.

This Procedure describes the EPA's Quality Program requirements for field activities and provides implementation instructions for a sustainable management system. Field activities are defined as activities conducted by EPA employees that require the collection of observations, samples, or other environmental information in support of EPA programs, Executive Orders, regulations, or environmental laws at a site or location to include, but not be limited to a facility, water body, or wetland. This Procedure applies to all EPA organizations and their sub-organizations (this includes but is not limited to an office, region, national center, or laboratory) whose EPA employees conduct field activities. This Procedure does not apply to non-EPA organizations such as contractors or grantees unless these requirements are explicitly stated and agreed upon in the extramural agreement. This Procedure describes all ten elements needed to implement EPA Quality Program requirements.

Background

The Regional Science and Technology Directors established a Field Operations Group (FOG) to promote national consistency among the Agency's field activities. The FOG developed ten operational guidelines, i.e., *Field Operations Group Operational Guidelines for Field Activities*, to ensure consistency in managing field practices and to reduce potential vulnerabilities. The FOG Guidelines are based on best practices for field activities as determined by EPA field groups, EPA quality requirements, and concepts of quality management systems established by the International Organization for Standardization. In March 2013, the Acting EPA Administrator issued a memorandum, *Consistent Field Operations at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency*. In this memorandum, the Acting EPA Administrator requested that all EPA organizations conducting field activities implement the ten FOG Guidelines by February 15, 2016. Since the FOG Guidelines are based on EPA's existing quality requirements, these Guidelines were issued as a Procedure under the existing Quality Policy. This Procedure has now been revised.

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