



Professional Planning Experience Worksheet

Overview

One of the most frequently asked questions from potential applicants is, “Does my professional experience qualify as planning experience for AICP certification?”

This worksheet allows applicants to self-determine whether their experience qualifies as professional planning experience based on:

- the three criteria that AICP has established to define professional practice
- the Planning Experience Assessment, which defines the elements of professional planning experience represented by the three criteria

Planners help create communities of lasting value by managing change. The goal of planning is to maximize the health, safety, and well-being of all people living in our communities. The AICP Commission has established three criteria that distinguish the experiences of professional planners from those of layperson planners, allied professionals, community stakeholders, and elected/appointed officials.

When to use this worksheet

Planners may use this worksheet throughout their journey to AICP Certification to determine if their past or current positions qualify as professional planning experience, and to identify how much and what kind of additional experience may still be required.

You may be required to prorate your experience if only a percentage of your time is devoted to planning work; use the [Interactive Experience Calculator](#) to total up your eligible planning experience.

Instructions

For each position you intend to submit as professional planning experience, answer the questions below to determine whether it qualifies as eligible planning experience. If you are able to check the required number of boxes for each question, your position meets all three of AICP’s criteria and may be submitted as eligible professional planning experience toward meeting the required years of experience.

When you have earned sufficient professional planning experience as defined on this worksheet, applying for AICP Certification includes completing the online Planning Experience Assessment. To prepare for the online assessment, use the [Planning Experience Assessment Worksheet](#).

CRITERION 1: Demonstrate a Professional Level of Responsibility and Resourcefulness While Applying a Planning Process Appropriate to the Project or Situation

Professional urban, rural, and regional planners apply multistep processes related to managing change in communities. Typical process steps include defining a problem or opportunity, setting goals and objectives, generating alternative strategies, selecting a preferred alternative, implementing the preferred strategy, and monitoring and evaluating strategy performance.

| In this position, do I regularly lead or am I responsible for applying all or parts of one or more of the following types of planning processes ? | Yes | No |
|---|-----|----|
| Plan making (e.g., regional, comprehensive, functional, subarea) | | |
| Community engagement | | |
| Regulatory or incentive program design | | |
| Zoning administration or development review | | |
| Analysis (e.g., economic, environmental, health, transportation, land use, housing, historic preservation, community development) | | |
| Development project or land-use site selection | | |
| Development project or land-use entitlement | | |
| Research program or project design | | |
| Research program or project execution | | |
| Plan, program, or project evaluation | | |
| Planning-related technical assistance or training | | |
| Planning-related course or curriculum development | | |
| Planning-related course or curriculum evaluation | | |

| In this position, do I regularly use one or more of the following professional planning skills and practices ? | Yes | No |
|--|-----|----|
| Incorporating equity principles and strategies | | |
| Collecting, analyzing, or visualizing data | | |
| Conducting public, partner, or stakeholder outreach | | |
| Facilitating public meetings, workshops, or other community engagement events | | |
| Rendering ministerial land-use decisions | | |
| Preparing staff reports, grant proposals, or grant reports | | |
| Conducting studies or analyses | | |
| Preparing spatial analysis and mapping | | |
| Drafting plans, rules, or ordinances | | |
| Providing public information, public testimony, or technical assistance | | |
| Evaluating potential impacts to natural, cultural, or social resources | | |
| Certifying planning-related studies, policies, or plans | | |
| Defining planning-related learning objectives or methods | | |
| Preparing planning-related presentations, manuscripts, or exercises | | |
| Critiquing planning student work | | |

CRITERION 2: Evaluate Multiple Impacts to a Community When Implementing Professional Planning Tasks

Professional urban, regional, and rural planners consider the interrelated effects of policies, programs, projects, and actions that cause or influence change in communities. They identify and evaluate the potential positive and negative effects of specific planning interventions and work to shape those interventions in ways that minimize negative impacts and create quality-of-life improvements for the communities they serve.

| In this position, do I regularly lead or am I responsible for conducting one or more of the following types of planning interventions ? | Yes | No |
|---|-----|----|
| A regional, comprehensive, functional, or subarea plan | | |
| Land-use or development regulations | | |
| A development plan or site plan | | |
| A financial or technical assistance program | | |
| A study or analysis | | |
| A public investment, facility, or service | | |
| A partnership or agreement | | |
| A land-use or development project application or review | | |
| A public awareness or education campaign | | |
| A planning-related research project | | |
| A planning-related instructional module or activity | | |

| In this position, when conducting the planning intervention(s) above, do I regularly consider more than one of the following consequences that could affect the community's quality of life ? | Yes | No |
|---|-----|----|
| Effects on air or water quality | | |
| Effects on climate adaptation or mitigation | | |
| Effects on community compatibility, identity, or appearance | | |
| Effects on economic or social welfare | | |
| Effects on energy supply or use | | |
| Effects on equity and inclusion | | |
| Effects on fiscal health | | |
| Effects on habitat or natural resources | | |
| Effects on hazards risk or vulnerability | | |
| Effects on historic or cultural resources | | |
| Effects on housing choice or affordability | | |
| Effects on infrastructure or community facilities | | |
| Effects on preexisting cultural or social fabric | | |
| Effects on public health, safety, or security | | |
| Effects on sustainability | | |
| Effects on community resilience | | |
| Effects on transportation access, safety, or convenience | | |

CRITERION 3: Influence Public Decision Making in the Public Interest

Professional urban, regional, and rural planners influence decisions related to managing change in communities made by elected or appointed public officials in ways that protect or improve the well-being of the general public. This influence may be through direct communication with public officials or through intermediary processes.

| In this position, do I use one or more of the following methods of influence ? | Yes | No |
|--|-----|----|
| Providing formal written recommendations to a board, commission, legislative body, or executive decision maker | | |
| Providing public testimony | | |
| Conducting research and writing policy briefs | | |
| Preparing educational or training materials | | |
| Conducting educational or training activities | | |
| Presenting research findings or analysis | | |
| Participating in advisory body meetings | | |

| In this position, do my actions or work products directly or indirectly influence one or more of the following types of public decisions made by elected or appointed officials ? | Yes | No |
|---|-----|----|
| A legislative body votes to adopt a plan, ordinance, resolution, agreement, or budget | | |
| A chief elected official signs an executive order | | |
| A planning commission votes to approve or deny a plan or discretionary use permit | | |
| A zoning board votes to approve or deny a variance or appeal | | |
| A chief appointed official or legislative body issues an administrative rule, directive, or policy | | |
| A chief appointed official or legislative body allocates funding for a project | | |
| A judge or court issues findings and conclusions | | |

| In this position, do the decisions my actions or work products influence serve the public interest in one or more of the following areas? | Yes | No |
|---|-----|----|
| Benefits to air or water quality | | |
| Benefits to climate adaptation or mitigation | | |
| Benefits to community compatibility, identity, or appearance | | |
| Benefits to economic or social welfare | | |
| Benefits to energy supply or use | | |
| Benefits to equity and inclusion | | |
| Benefits to fiscal health | | |
| Benefits to habitat or natural resources | | |
| Benefits to hazards risk or vulnerability | | |
| Benefits to historic or cultural resources | | |
| Benefits to housing choice or affordability | | |
| Benefits to infrastructure or community facilities | | |
| Benefits to preexisting cultural or social fabric | | |
| Benefits to public health, safety, or security | | |
| Benefits to sustainability | | |
| Benefits to community resilience | | |
| Benefits to transportation access, safety, or convenience | | |

Please contact AICP customer service at aicp@planning.org if you have additional questions.