

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.