Q&A from the July 2015 FY17 AA-BE-CA-FA Training Sessions

1. **How will the Programs know if the AA needs to go to the Core Public Health Committee?**
   This is a decision made by your program's management so you will need to ask them about whether your Activity's AA is to be reviewed this year by the Core Committee. Generally, new Activities and Activities that have undergone some changes will be brought to the Core Public Health Committee for their review. The Branch Head is the person who will bring the AA to the Core Committee at the scheduled meeting.

2. **Should we or can we copy and paste information from a previous AA?**
   Yes, you can copy and paste each section of the document, one section at a time into the new year's AA Template.

3. **What is the QA Checklist?**
   QA stands for Quality Assurance. Once your AA has been reviewed and is declared final, you will need to have your Branch Head review it. The Branch Head will then complete a QA Checklist to certify that the AA meets the standards listed on the checklist form. The signed and dated checklist needs to be returned to the Contracts Office before the AA can be released to the LHDs.

4. **Who inserts the asterisk (*) on the Budgetary Estimate forms and why?**
   Data entered by the program staff into the Aid-to-Counties database includes information about whether an AA is required for that BE or BE Revision. (If the funds go up or down for any single LHD, an AA is required.) If the data entered states that an AA or AA revision is required, that info will appear on the BE in the form of an asterisk in the column next to the LHD's county name. (The revision number for that required AA or AA revision is listed in the column to the right of the asterisk column on the BE.)

5. **When completing the AA Scope of Work, can I refer to a work plan or a report on the Program's website rather than describing it in the AA?**
   Yes, you can refer to a work plan or a report if you are able to be specific about it. You can either provide details about the work plan or the report directly in the AA itself or you can direct the LHDs to your program's website to find the details. If you use the website method, that information <u>must</u> be on your program's website by February 14 (when the LHDs get the AA) and the info listed on the AA must match what's on your website. Typically, listing the work plan's name or reports' name and the website's URL are sufficient for the LHD to find the referenced document.

6. **Does the Agreement Addenda Template get changed annually?**
   Yes, it has been updated each year for the last few years. The FY17 template is in the .docx format as all of DPH has now migrated away from Office 2003. Also, the FY17 template is no longer locked so users can now use Microsoft Word's tracked changes feature at the outset.

7. **What if part of the Signature Box does not print on page 1, but appears on page 2?**
   All of the Signature Box must be on the first page or the AA will be sent back to be fixed. Contact the AA Team Leader if you are having difficulties with the AA Template.

8. **Will the time frame to enter information into the Aid-to-Counties database be extended for the Major Distribution?**
   No. The window for DPH Staff to enter information into the Aid-to-Counties database is 11/23 – 12/7/15. This deadline is for all of us in DPH — Program, Contracts, and Budget.

   You have the option of entering your data into ATC earlier, using the earlier window of 10/26 – 11/6/15. If you get your BE in earlier, it's possible to get it back certified earlier, which would allow you more time to produce your AA+BE pages.

9. **Are the instructions for naming files included in the handouts?**
   Yes, the naming convention for AA drafts is located on page 9 of the AA Process Guide. The naming convention for the AA+BE files is on page 10 of the Guide. (The AA+BE files are the PDF files sent to the LHDs for them to sign and mail back.)

10. **Can Program staff have a copy of the information on the poster on how to assemble the AA package?**
    Yes, information about how to produce the AA+BE documents is located on page 10 of the AA Process Guide under the heading "Producing AA+BE Documents."

11. **Why can't the AA's be accepted with electronic signatures?**
    This is a DPH Administrative decision and DPH has always required original signatures. Any change to DPH's process regarding this will need to be made at the DPH Administration level.

12. **Will the Program staff receive an original copy of the AA?**
    The DPH Contracts Office requires an original of every signed agreement and maintains them per NC DHHS requirements.

    We request that the LHDs send two originals of every AA and AA revision. If they mail two originals, the second original of nonnegotiable AAs are given to the program. (If not, a copy is made and that is what's given to the program.) For negotiable AAs, both originals need to receive two signatures (the LHD and the Program). For negotiable AAs, the Contracts Office keeps one fully executed original and returns the other fully executed original to the LHD. (So the program will have a copy of the negotiable AA.)

13. **What if the grant year starts after the beginning of the fiscal year, such as August?**
    All AAs must be for a full 12 months, starting on June 1 and ending on May 31. (There are a few exceptions.) As no federal grants run on our state fiscal year, any AA funded by a federal grant will have its funds from two different federal grant *years*. If the federal grant year starts in August, the single AA will be funded for June to July from one federal grant year and will be funded August to May for the next federal grant year.

    If you think you have an exception, please discuss it with the AA Team Leader to determine if that is so.

14. **How do you put funds in the ATC database if there is no NGA yet?**
    Please contact your Budget Officer to find out what the center codes would be for your subsequent years' grant award. If it is the first year of an award, the process for getting a new center code established requires the NGA to have been received. So for that first year, it isn't possible to enter funds into ATC without having received the first year's NGA.

15. **What is the focus of AA reviews for FY17?**
    The focus for FY17 draft reviews will be in Sections 3, 4, and 5, which are the SOW, Measures, and Monitoring sections. As described in the training, these three sections should "dovetail" or fit together to form three aspects of the Activity. The SOW section should list all the work the LHD is to perform. The Measures section should list what work and how the work is to be measured — if you're measuring it, that work itself should be described in the SOW. The Monitoring section should list how you will be monitoring the work — you are monitoring what you are measuring. So this would be things like site visits and reports. It must be possible to monitor those things you are measuring by the methods you list. So for example, if you are reviewing items they keep on site, that would require a site visit.

16. **If you have several counties which are very different, how do you request the information so that you get what you need from each county?**
    The language you use in your AA should provide the LHDs with the best description of what work you are expecting of them. It may be that you expect different work from different counties, such as requiring quantifiably more contacts with other entities in a larger county. So it may be necessary to have more than one "variation" of your AA.

17. **Does the paragraph numbering scheme matter when completing the AA?**
    No, just be consistent throughout your sections. For example, if you start with numbered paragraphs, any subparagraphs should use something other than numbers, such as upper case or lower case letters.

18. **How do you specify certain requirements with various types of advertisements such as media, the local press, and/or brochures?**
    If the LHD is required to follow requirements such as including certain citations if they produce printed materials (e.g., flyers, brochures, advertisements), the requirement belongs in the SOW section.

19. **How should abbreviations appear in an AA?**
    For something that is commonly referred to with initials or an acronym, the first time it is mentioned, it should be spelled out and the initials cited. If your AA is long, it may be clearer if you repeat the complete name again in later sections.

    As the words used in the Purpose section are often taken out of the AA and used as a summary for the AA in other documents, it is best if you spell out the items in that section even if they were already spelled out in the Background section.

    The only time you would ever use NC in place of North Carolina is if the NC is part of the name that you are citing. For most every program at DPH, the program's actual name includes North Carolina and not NC. (But DPH — Division of Public Health — needs to be spelled out only once.)

20. **Can you make text bold in the AA?**
    For the most part, it is best to use regular text in your Activity's AA. If you are able to be sparing in your use of bold text, it can be used. Please note that the format of the AA includes bold text for the section headings, so your use of bold text will compete with that.

21. **Is there going to be ATC database training?**
    The Aid-to-Counties database is the DPH Budget Office's database, therefore any training on it will need to be conducted by the Budget Office. The Contracts Office will pass along to the Budget Office that there was interest by some of the Program Staff to take such a training course.