

Module One — Fundamentals of Public Works

History and Functions of Public Works

For the public works professionals to perform their jobs well, it is important that they understand the context of local government and service delivery. The course provides the historical context of local government and public works.

Public Works Services

Public works professionals need to be familiar with all aspects of the profession. This course is based on the eight broad categories of Public Works as described by the American Public Works Association.

Risk Management and Workplace Safety

Public works employees face inherent danger in the work they do. Risk management programs strive to mitigate those dangers. This session will introduce participants to the fundamentals of risk management and safety issues.

Module Two — The Political Environment of Public Works

Role of Public Services in a Democratic Society

This session will explore the foundations of democratic society and the role that public services have in promoting them.

Creating Public Value in Local Government

The session will help public works professionals demonstrate that they create public value, explore effective public policymaking, and the role of the professional staff in the process.

Political Values and Decision Making

Local government managers must navigate a political environment to practice their profession. To do that effectively, they must understand the values that elected officials use to make policy decisions.

Module Three — Legal and Ethical Issues in Public Works

Ethics

Public works professionals are allowed discretion in their decision-making. It is important that they can identify ethical dilemmas and resolve them appropriately.

Effective Influencing Strategies

The exercise of leadership requires persuading others to participate in accomplishing work. Participants will explore appropriate approaches to motivate stakeholders to join them in providing services to the public. Learning Objectives will include the following: description of common influencing strategies; selecting appropriate influencing strategies for different situations; and the ability to analyze ethical issues associated with the exercise of power.

Examining Liability Issues in Public Works

The exercise of authority in public works management carries potential legal risks. Participants in this session will examine legal issues related to those potential risks. The participants will learn techniques to identify potential liability exposures related to public works, administer policies and procedures legally, and assess management actions for potential liability issues.

Module Four — Leadership and Management

Theories of Leadership

The session will introduce participants to theories of leadership, with a strong focus on technical and adaptive leadership.

Applied Leadership

The session will introduce participants to the application of adaptive leadership to address a real-life problem. Participants will work in consulting groups to employ the participant case method.

Fundamentals of Leadership and Management

In order to be successful in his or her profession, a practitioner of local government public works must exercise management and leadership. This session will help the professionals understand when each technique is appropriate.

Module Five — Managing Service Delivery in Public Works

Effective Communication

Employees in the public works area sometimes act as supervisors and/or are called upon to coach those with whom they work. Further, public works officials communicate with co-workers, citizens, elected officials and others. Participants in this class will learn strategies for coaching those they supervise and/or mentor. Also, they will learn skills for communicating in an effective manner.

Customer Service and Conflict Resolution

The nature of managing public works requires the practitioner to interact with the public to provide good service. It also can create contentious situations for the practitioner when members of the public are not satisfied with responses. This course will help the practitioner learn to conduct himself or herself in a professional manner.

Managing Budgets

Managing financial resources is a critical component of an effective public works program. This course will introduce participants to strategies for identifying and utilizing financial resources.

Module Six — Process Improvement in Public Works

Project Management

Public works professionals are required to manage large and small projects in the performance of their jobs. The course will familiarize the public works professional with effective project management techniques.

Measuring Performance

This course will explore the best practices for using and assembling performance measures in local government public works departments; how to effectively utilize performance measurement to improve departmental performance and manage efficiency; and strategies for using these tools to get the public works department's budget approved.

Strategic Planning

Strategic planning formulates policy, defines mission, develops a shared vision, leads development of organizational values, and creates a diverse organization. This session will give participants strategies for thinking strategically.