



TO: Names

FROM: Names

DATE: X/X/XXXX

RE: Evaluation options for [PROGRAM]

In this memo, we propose options for evaluating high priority questions in the [PROGRAM]. Based on OES' expertise in evaluation design and implementation, we present ideas for rigorous evaluations that build evidence on: [KEY QUESTIONS].

We begin by describing the different types of evaluations and what evidence each type of evaluation could generate. Then, we recommend specific evaluations that could be implemented to build evidence on priority questions for the [PROGRAM].

Definition and Approaches to Evaluation

The Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act ("Evidence Act") defines evaluation as an assessment using systematic data collection and analysis of one or more programs, policies, and organizations.¹ Evaluation is used to assess effectiveness and efficiency of programs, policies, and organizations. Evaluation is not the only activity that contributes to evidence-based policymaking; other activities including independent audits, basic scientific research and development, policy analysis, and performance measurement, are also useful.² However, Title I of the Evidence Act elevates program evaluation as a critical agency function.

OES provides the following evaluation services:

Descriptive: OES conducts a descriptive evaluation to help better understand aspects of your program without directly assessing effectiveness.

Formative: OES conducts a formative evaluation to help assess whether your program is feasible and appropriate before it's fully implemented.

Process or implementation: OES conducts a process or implementation evaluation to assess whether your program was implemented as intended.

Outcome: OES conducts an outcome evaluation to measure the extent to which a program has achieved its intended purpose.

Impact: OES conducts an impact evaluation to provide quantitative estimates of the causal relationship between activities and observable outcomes.

¹ Congress, U. S. "Foundations for Evidence-Based Policy Making Act of 2018." In *115th Congress HR*, vol. 4174. 2018.

² Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget. [M-21-27: Memorandum for Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies. Evidence-Based Policymaking: Learning Agendas and Annual Evaluation Plans](#). June 30, 2021.

SUBSECTION TITLE

Put motivation / description here.

Evaluation A

Motivation	High-level motivation for the proposed design.
Question	1-3 bullet points on questions it could answer.
Approach	Descriptive, Formative, Process or implementation, Outcome, Impact
Methods	Quick description of research design: randomization, quasi-experimental, etc.
Outcome(s)	Description of outcome being assessed.
Priority	Low / Middle / High Include justification here: could be in terms of ability to answer agency priority questions, inferential rigor, or some other perspective.
Level of effort	Low / Middle / High Include justification here: effort may be due to finding the right partner; data matching or searching; administrative approvals (PRA / IRB / OIRA, etc.); implementation hurdles (working with outside partners, etc.); amount of staff time, etc.
Partner prerequisites	Optional: include here description of best-fit partner (e.g., city or state who is able to randomize, etc.).