

# PHASE → Purpose | How | ACTION PLAN | Support | Examine

A Roadmap to Implementation

## The Importance of an ACTION PLAN

A clear action plan is crucial for courts implementing new policies, practices, or programs as it facilitates clear communication, aligns efforts, optimizes resource allocation, mitigates risks, and fosters accountability. **It serves as a guiding document that helps the court system navigate the complexities of change and increases the likelihood of successful implementation.**

## Elements of an ACTION PLAN

An action plan should have the following elements:

- 1. Agreed upon tasks, timelines, and responsibilities.** Utilize the action plan to outline clear steps, tasks, and milestones for a structured implementation process. Assign ownership of tasks to individuals or teams to enhance accountability, commitment, and responsibility in achieving objectives and timelines.
- 2. Agreed upon communication plan.** Set clear expectations for communication frequency and methods to track progress on the action plan. Balance frequent updates to maintain momentum and engagement with sufficient time for progress. Transparent and regular communication builds trust, manages expectations, and garners support and buy-in throughout implementation.
- 3. Agreed upon performance measures to monitor implementation.** Use the action plan to establish a basis for monitoring the progress of the implementation efforts by defining key performance measures. Regularly tracking performance measures and sharing progress with those involved helps to identify issues and inform modifications to the plan.

## Connecting the Dots

The components of the PHASE framework are interrelated and interdependent. While each component can be focused on in isolation, decisions and efforts in one area affect and inform the others. **The action plan documents the specific tasks required to implement the change, the expected timeline, and the individuals responsible.**

- ▶ **Purpose:** Continually refer to the purpose while developing the action plan to guard against mission creep.
- ▶ **How:** Use the readiness assessment to assign tasks and responsibilities and leverage identified opportunities and strengths.
- ▶ **Support:** Include specific opportunities for feedback and reflection in the action plan to identify training and coaching needs.
- ▶ **Examine:** Routinely monitoring progress on the action plan provides valuable information for examining implementation.

## Considerations for Courts

- ▶ Use the action plan to ensure equitable sharing of responsibilities among team members with diverse roles and backgrounds. Clearly define roles and tasks based on expertise, capacity, and availability. Encourage open discussions among team members about their preferred contributions, allowing for potential rotation or reassignment of responsibilities.
- ▶ When implementing new policies, practices, or programs in courts, address risks proactively. Include tasks in the action plan to develop contingency plans, monitor risks, and prepare alternative approaches. Encourage regular communication to address barriers and challenges as they arise.
- ▶ Recognize and celebrate quick wins and successes during the change process. This boosts motivation, especially for low-effort achievements that may otherwise be overlooked, and keeps the team focused on the action plan.

For more information or for assistance applying these principles to implement a new policy, practice, or program in your court, visit [www.ncsc.org/phase](http://www.ncsc.org/phase).