

**Appendix 1A**  
**Instructions for Conducting**  
**A Community Assessment**

## Instructions For Conducting A Community Assessment

These step-by step instructions are intended to be used with the California Department of Health Services, Tobacco Control Section's (TCS) *Community Indicators and Assets* material found in Appendix 1 of this manual.

Remember, this is best done as a group activity with the tobacco control team. Completing the assessment could easily take more than one meeting of the group.

- Step 1 *Locate Appendix 1B and familiarize yourselves with its layout. Note that it is divided into separate sections for each of the 4 major tobacco control priority areas (e.g., Eliminate Secondhand Smoke Exposure). Start out by having a group discussion of which of the 4 priority areas you should start with. Pick the one that seems most relevant to your community today.*
- Step 2 *Go through each indicator in that priority area as a group and decide which ones apply to your specific community. Not all indicators will apply to every community. Assign responsibility for gathering data for each indicator in your list. Reconvene the group when the data becomes available.*
- Step 3 *Hand out copies of the **Community Indicator Assessment Form** found in Appendix 1C. Pick the first indicator that you want to work on and write its name on the form. You are now ready to rate the indicator.*
- Step 4 *As a group, discuss and rate your community on each item that applies. You might also want to individually rate the items that apply and then have a group discussion to compare ratings before agreeing on a final rating. If you need help understanding the rating scales, TCS has developed specific definitions for each point. These are found in Appendix 1E, **Definitions of Attributes for Community Assessment Forms***

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<sup>1</sup>Note: These are the same instructions contained in Tool 3A of this Manual

## Appendix 1A

- Step 5** *Now look over all the ratings that apply to the indicator and give the indicator an overall rating on the scale provided. This is a judgement call based on the collective wisdom of the group. Do not average the ratings for the individual items.*
- Step 6** *Fill out the third page of the indicator rating form. Have someone in charge of filling out and keeping a master copy of each assessment form.*
- Step 7** *Handout new copies of **Community Indicator Assessment Form** and repeat the process for the next indicator that applies. Repeat steps 3-6 until all the indicators that apply to the tobacco control priority area have been rated.*
- Step 8** *Now, go back and repeat the process in Steps 2 - 7 for the indicators in each of the other 3 tobacco control priority areas.*
- Step 9** *Handout copies of the **Community Asset Assessment Form** found in Appendix 1D. As a group, decide which of the 8 assets applies to your community situation.*
- Step 10** *Rate each community asset that applies on the scale provided. Have someone in charge of filling out and keeping a master copy of the asset assessment form for your community.*
- Step 11** *At this point you will have assembled all the ratings for each indicator and asset that applies to your community. This group of ratings will be immensely useful in going to the next step in developing a community plan. At this point, consider as a group the merits of developing a report to the community using your assessment results. Such reports can often be useful in educating the community and motivating others to become involved.*