



Arkansas Opioid Recovery Partnership (ARORP) Transparency Evaluation Brief – February 2025

Transparency of public projects, like the National Prescription Opioid Litigation, has become more important over the past two decades. Transparency refers to the visibility of recorded information, and it is a major goal of ARORP. The outside evaluation of transparency involves the measurement and documentation of the degree to which a project publishes its resources, expenditures, decision-making, and data in straightforward ways.

Five independent reviewers score 12 elements of transparency twice a year. The methodology changed in January 2025 to be more detailed and reflective of ARORP efforts. Elements are scored on two dimensions, each with a five-point scale, and reviewers provide comments when appropriate. The first dimension is how *easily the element can be found* and the second is how *easily the element can be understood*. Elements and their definitions can be found in the Appendix on page 3. This brief summarizes scores for the third round of reviews and provides recommendations on how to improve transparency moving forward.

Chart 1: Overall Average Scores Between 0 and 4 for Each Element

Reviewers agreed that three elements were fully transparent, and all twelve elements were easily or very easily found and understood.



OVERALL, ARORP TRANSPARENCY IS VERY HIGH WITH FIVE REVIEWERS SCORING ALL TWELVE ELEMENTS EASILY FOUND AND UNDERSTOOD TO VERY EASILY FOUND AND UNDERSTOOD. THE MOST ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT IS FOR THE ELEMENTS OF FOUNDATIONS, EXPENDITURES, AND USE.

Table 1: Average Scores Between 0 and 4 on Each Element by Dimension, Area, and Overall

Scores vary slightly between 3 (easily found and understood) and 4 (very easily found and understood). This variation reflects an overall high level of transparency.

Elements	Found	Under stood	Overall
Organizational (Area Average of 3.9)			
Advisory Board	4	4	4
Meeting Agendas	4	3.6	3.8
Decision Making	4	4	4
Financial (Area Average of 3.5)			
Foundations	3.2	3.2	3.2
Allocations	3.8	4	3.9
Expenditures	3.2	3.6	3.4
Informational (Area Average of 3.6)			
Publication	3.8	3.8	3.8
Clarity	3.6	3.6	3.6
Use	3.6	3.4	3.5
Provisional (Area Average of 3.8)			
Awards	4	4	4
Services	3.6	3.8	3.7
Numbers Served	3.4	4	3.7

Ideally, each element would receive a perfect score of 4, where all five reviewers easily found and understood every element. Three elements received an overall perfect score, four elements received a perfect found score and four elements received a perfect understood score. The lowest overall score was for the *foundations* element. This element is fully transparent when strategic goals and the process ARORP goes through to receive funding are made public.

Recommendations

1. Place ARORP’s strategic goals and how ARORP receives national litigation funding on the website (potentially on the “About Us” page) where they can be easily found and understood.
2. Read through the entire ARORP website for overall clarity to ensure it uses plain language, avoids jargon, and succinctly states important details.
3. Find a way to make sure the most recent Advisory Council meeting agendas are put on the website within one month after the meeting.

Specific reviewer comments included:

“This website does a great job of explaining things.”

“Each category presents clear instructions and each...is easy to understand while mostly avoiding jargon or complicated language.”

“Meeting agendas only available up to May 2024.”

Appendix: Elements and Definitions Used for Scoring

Elements	Definition
Advisory Board	The <i>Advisory Board</i> is fully transparent when its membership is made public and contains diverse statewide representation. Reviewers look for a list of Advisory Board members with affiliations.
Meeting Agendas	<i>Meeting Agendas</i> are fully transparent when past agendas are made public following an Advisory Board meeting. Reviewers look for the most recent agenda with a date and meeting topics.
Decision Making	<i>Decision Making</i> is fully transparent when the ARORP funding decision process is made public. Reviewers look for basic directions about how to apply for and win funding.
Foundations	Organizational <i>Foundations</i> are fully transparent when strategic goals and the process ARORP goes through to receive funding are made public. Reviewers look for a basic description of ARORP, why it exists, and where it gets its funding.
Allocations	<i>Allocations</i> are fully transparent when ARORP makes public the distribution of funding to local service providers. Reviewers look for simple details on what providers get funded by which project type. Reviewers are not looking for provider budgets.
Expenditures	<i>Expenditures</i> are fully transparent when basic funding for ARORP service providers are made public. Reviewers look for basic categories of spending by project type.
Publication	<i>Publication</i> is fully transparent when critical information (in this case the funding and application process) is made publicly available. Reviewers look for basic information on how providers apply for and receive funding.
Clarity	<i>Clarity</i> is fully transparent when critical information (in this case the funding and application process in the above element) is clear, consistent, and complete in its presentation. Reviewers look to see if the funding application is written in lay person language and avoids jargon.
Use	<i>Use</i> is fully transparent when public usage of critical information is collected and reported by ARORP. Note ARORP will be asked for these numbers biannually. Reviewers look to see if ARORP provides these numbers to us.
Awards	<i>Awards</i> are fully transparent when grants to local service providers with provider information are made public. Reviewers look for a list of funded providers and information about them.
Services	<i>Services</i> are fully transparent when a list of funded services and activities are made public. Reviewers look for just the basic types of ARORP projects and services. Reviewers look for specific services for each provider or by community.
Numbers Served	<i>Numbers Served</i> are fully transparent when the number of individuals served by each project type is regularly summarized and made public. Reviewers look for the Quarterly Report summarizing people served across the state.