

Arkansas Opioid Recovery Partnership (ARORP) Transparency Evaluation Brief – September 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 independent 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 one element was 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. HOWEVER, THERE IS AN INCREMENTAL DROP IN THE AVERAGE SCORE FROM 3.8 IN JANUARY 2025 TO 3.3 IN JULY 2025.

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 3.6)			
Advisory Board	3.8	3.6	3.7
Meeting Agendas	3.4	3.6	3.5
Decision Making	3.8	3.4	3.6
Financial (Area Average of 3.3)			
Foundations	4	3.4	3.8
Allocations	3.2	3.4	3.3
Expenditures	3	3.4	3
Informational (Area Average of 3.3)			
Publication	3.6	3.4	3.5
Clarity	3.6	3.4	3.5
Use	4	4	4
Provisional (Area Average of 3.3)			
Awards	3.2	3.4	3.3
Services	3	3.2	3.1
Numbers Served	3.4	3.4	3.4

Ideally, each element would receive a perfect score of 4, where all five reviewers easily found and understood every element. The lowest overall score was for the *expenditures* element, and the highest for the *use* element. Scores varied slightly between January and July 2025 – the organizational element decreased from 3.9 to 3.6, Financial decreased from 3.5 to 3.3, Informational decreased from 3.6 to 3.3, and Provisional decreased from 3.8 to 3.3). However, this is likely explained by a new set of anonymous reviewers. Three reviewers had no

knowledge of ARORP prior to scoring. Even then, elements were typically easy to find and understand.

Recommendation

1. Scan the entire ARORP website through the eyes of a young person with no knowledge of ARORP, or convene a round table of several young people to review the website for clarity and ease of understanding.

Specific reviewer comments included:

“It was very difficult to understand what ARORP does just by looking at the website for a person who does not have background knowledge in the area.”

“Sentences are not always transparent and make short cut references, such as ‘ample settlement funds to disburse.’ This sentence appears to be referencing something that requires background knowledge not guaranteed to be understood by a lay person.”

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.