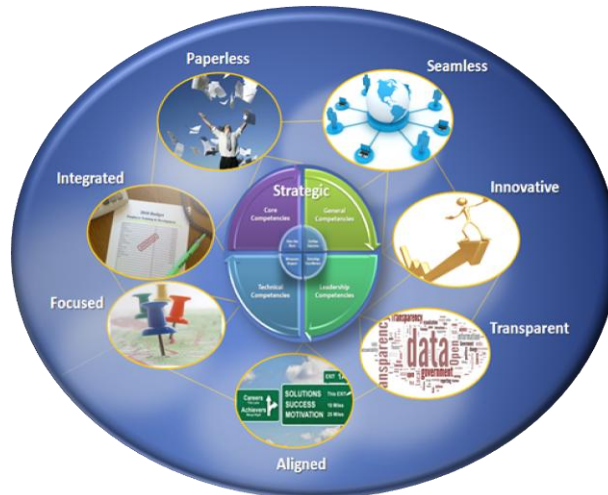


# ***Electronic Individual Development Plan Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)***



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***What is the E-Individual Development Plan (E-IDP)?***

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### **1. *What is an Individual Development Plan (IDP)?***

**ANSWER:**

- An individually-tailored action plan to develop specific competencies (knowledge and skills) you need to improve performance in your present position or to prepare for new responsibilities;
- A written plan for scheduling and managing your development;
- A map that specifies immediate and long-range actions you can take to attain your goals;
- A tool for your supervisor to estimate and plan resources needed to support your development;
- A tool for your organization to develop its workforce to meet future needs.

### **2. *What is the E-Individual Development Plan (E-IDP)?***

**ANSWER:** The E-IDP is an automated version of the former paper-based form. However, unlike the blank IDP form template used in the past at NARA, the E-IDP has many enhancements including:

- Completely automated, administered, and managed via NARA's LMS;
- Drop-down ("pick") lists to guide you and your supervisor to complete the form;
- Dynamic links to resources you can use to assess your learning and development needs and identify a wide range of free and inexpensive developmental activities.

**Please note:** Although the form itself and the way it is administered has changed from a technical perspective, many of the basic tenets are the same as the original IDP, for example:

- a. You and your supervisor must meet to discuss and reach agreement on needs, priorities, types of activities, funding, etc., prior to approving your plan;
- b. The E-IDP is an agreement - not a contract, and should be viewed as a "living, breathing document" e.g., updated on a regular basis to reflect changes in needs, priorities, completions, etc.
- c. Priority consideration must be given to develop/enhance competencies related to your current position (versus a future position).

### **3. *Why is NARA replacing the current paper-based IDP form?***

**ANSWER:** NARA is revamping the IDP based on feedback received from staff through the Employee Viewpoint Survey and other means. Feedback indicated that NARA's IDP process had become a "paperwork" exercise that did not provide meaningful access to training and development opportunities. In addition, the paper-based process did not enable NARA to view or analyze training needs systematically on an enterprise level. By automating the process, NARA will be able to see and manage training needs more efficiently and strategically.

### **4. *I don't want/need training right now - do I still have to create an E-IDP?***

**ANSWER:** Yes. At a minimum, all employees must complete the "Mandatory Training Requirements" section of the E-IDP. If that is the only section of the E-IDP you wish to complete, then that is all you need to do!

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## 5. What is a “Training Need”?

**ANSWER:** A “training need” is defined as a gap between the existing and the desired (or required) [competency](#) or proficiency. Training, as it used in this context, refers to the full spectrum of developmental activities including traditional classroom based instruction (ILT), On-The-Job Training (OJT), Developmental Assignments (e.g., workgroups, job shadowing, rotational assignments, etc.), web-based training (E-Learning, E-Books, Virtual Instructor Led Training, etc.).

## 6. Why does the E-IDP ask me to identify my career goals?

**ANSWER:** Identifying your career goals can help you structure decisions about the types of training and development activities you should pursue. For example, if your goal is to stay in your current position and continue to develop the competencies associated with it, then you should identify training and development activities that are linked to the skills you need to perform your current job. However, if your goal is to move into a different job, you should identify training and development activities that are linked to the competencies needed for that new job. The E-IDP will let you select from three Career Goal options. These are listed in the table below (if none of these match your career goal, you can enter your own in a free text field):

Career Goal	What Does it Mean?
No career change expected or desired	The employee desires to stay in their current position and continue to develop and/or enhance the competencies associated with it. This is often referred to as “Career Enrichment”
Lateral move within in or outside my current department/office/agency	The employee desires or is willing to lateral internally or externally to diversify their competencies. This is often referred to as “Career Diversification”.
Promote within or outside my current department/office/agency	The employee has the appropriate competencies and desires to be promoted internally or externally. This is often referred to as “Career Development”

Another reason to enter your career goal information in the E-IDP is that it will help NARA to better understand the overall career aspirations of the NARA workforce as a whole. This, in turn, will help NARA to identify future workforce planning and career pathing initiatives. You will never be “penalized” for identifying your career goals. Likewise, identifying a career goal in the E-IDP does not guarantee you a career change.

## 7. How does the E-IDP relate to Performance Appraisals?

**ANSWER:** An IDP and a performance appraisal have the same focus; fostering individual and organizational improvement. However, a performance appraisal is more like an end-of-year profit and loss statement while an IDP is an investment plan. They should work together, but they have different orientations. As stated earlier, the e-IDP is a living document that reflects changes in work requirements, individual development, etc. The performance appraisal occurs annually at a set time of year.

## 8. Once I am finished filling out my E-IDP, what do I do next?

**ANSWER:** At the bottom of the form there are three buttons – “Save”, “Print”, and “Route”.

- Select “**Save**” (the screen will automatically refresh)
- Select “**Print**” (recommended)
- Select “**Route**”

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The form will be electronically routed to your Supervisor of Record (based on NARA's FPPS data structure) for review and approval<sup>1</sup>. We encourage **ALL** staff to meet with their supervisor/employees to discuss their E-IDP, and agree on any changes prior to approving and saving it. If changes are made during that meeting, it is recommended that you print another copy of the E-IDP for your files. The E-IDP will be automatically re-routed to you and your supervisor on a quarterly basis. At that time you should update it (e.g., new training needs, check the completion box for any training completed during the quarter, etc.).

**9. Who has access to my E-IDP and how will it be used?**

**ANSWER:** On an individual level, only you (or anyone you grant access to), your supervisor, and select staff in the Learning and Development Division will have direct access to your E-IDP. On an agency-wide basis, aggregate E-IDP data will be used to assist NARA in completing strategic and workforce planning activities, and responding to certain regulatory reporting requirements.

**10. How can I get answers to questions about the E-IDP?**

**ANSWER:** There are several ways you can find out more information about the E-IDP including:

- If you are working in the E-IDP and need immediate assistance, please select the "[Live E-IDP Support](#)" link;
- If you are not working in the E-IDP and/or do not need immediate answers, please submit them to [lmswebrequest@nara.gov](mailto:lmswebrequest@nara.gov) or call 301-837-1954;
- The NARA [Learning and Development Resource Guide](#)
- The NARA [Individual Development Plan Guide](#)

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<sup>1</sup> Please note: Your E-IDP cannot be modified electronically unless your supervisor re-routes it back to you.