

STEPP GRANTEE ONBOARDING GUIDE & CHECKLIST FOR [Grantee Name]

Welcome to STEPP!

Welcome to the [State Tobacco Education and Prevention Partnership \(STEPP\) program](#)! We are so glad you are joining this work. This guide outlines what to expect as part of STEPP, who your key contacts are, what resources are available to you, and the onboarding steps you need to complete. You are not doing this work alone — the CDPHE STEPP team, Technical Assistance (TA) providers, and your grantee peers are here to support you every step of the way! As a grantee, you will learn and understand that you are not doing the work alone, but are supported and trusted as tobacco control advocates.

***Only STEPP Program Managers and day-to-day program staff are required to complete the checklist.**

About STEPP

STEPP is housed within the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) and drives the statewide tobacco/nicotine control movement by:

- Staying current on national and state tobacco and other nicotine product trends
- Setting strategic direction and providing clear guidance to grantees
- Supporting evidence-based programming through resources, training, and TA
- Working toward health equity with communities most affected by tobacco/nicotine use

Colorado 2030 Strategic Plan

STEPP's work is guided by the [2030 Strategic Plan](#) that outlines priority goal areas and a commitment to equity.

At CDPHE, we want everyone in Colorado to easily access the information and resources we provide. We understand that some people may need documents and information in different formats. [More information is available here](#)



STEPP provides Amendment 35 and Prop EE grant funding to a large network of grantees, including Local Public Health Agencies (LPHAs), to implement tobacco/nicotine prevention and control strategies in their communities. Your work is a critical piece of the statewide effort, as evidenced by [this model](#).

FY27-29 The Tobacco/Nicotine Community Initiatives Framework

STEPP community grantees (LPHAs and Community-led grantees) structure their work based on the Community Tobacco Initiatives Framework. STEPP published an “[LPHA Core Framework](#)” and a “Community-Led Grantee (CLG) Framework.” Each Framework provides a comprehensive outline of approaches to community tobacco initiatives in FY27-FY29. The Frameworks align community-level work with the goals and priorities of the 2030 Strategic Plan, focusing efforts on evidence-based strategies proven to reduce tobacco/nicotine use. The Frameworks ensure a statewide tobacco control infrastructure and work in all goal areas. They are designed to prioritize equity, sustainability, and local capacity, and to enable sustained, long-term community relationships and policy work.

Goal Areas & Strategies

Goal 1:

Keep Youth and Young Adults Tobacco-Free

By 2030, reduce the number of young people, under the age of 24, who use any tobacco or other nicotine products, including e-cigarettes, for youth and young adults under age 24 to below 15%.

Strategy 1.1: Increase Retail Restrictions to Reduce Youth Access to Tobacco and Other Nicotine, Illegal Sales to Coloradans Under 21 Years of Age, and Tobacco/Nicotine-related Disparities.

Strategy 1.2: Integrate Tobacco/Nicotine Prevention and Cessation Best Practices into the School Environment.

Goal 2:

Protect People and the Environment

By 2030, expand protections from secondhand smoke, vapor, and tobacco product toxic waste exposure for populations that are inequitably exposed.

Strategy 2.1: Eliminate Secondhand Smoke and Vape Aerosols Exposure in Multi-Unit Housing.

Strategy 2.2: Eliminate Secondhand Smoke and Vape Aerosols Exposure in Public Community Settings.

Goal 3:

Expand support for People Quitting Tobacco

By 2030, increase the reach of tobacco treatment into priority populations by 50%.

Strategy 3.1: Support sustainable systems that connect community members to resources and treatment for nicotine addiction.

Your Key Contacts

STEPP Project Officer

Your STEPP Project Officer (PO) is your first point of contact for any questions about the work. We typically have a check-in call once a month, but your PO is available at any time to answer questions about your Scope of Work (SOW), Implementation Plan (IP), reporting requirements, invoicing, or anything else related to the program. Don't hesitate to reach out!

[PO Name]

[Title]

[email address]@state.co.us

Training & Technical Assistance (TA) Providers

TA providers are external STEPP grantee partners who provide specialized, in-depth support to help you implement your tobacco control and cessation strategies. Please review the [Technical Assistance Ecosystem](#) to learn more about how the network of STEPP grantees, TA providers, and STEPP staff works together to advance the Colorado tobacco control movement.

[Grantee/Contractor] STEPP Grant Overview

As a STEPP grantee, your agency operates under a standard Statement of Work (SOW) for the 3-year grant cycle and an annual Implementation Plan (IP) that guides specific capacity-building and strategy-level work.

Grant Cycle	The Fiscal Year 2027 to 2029 (FY27/29) 3-year grant cycle (July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2029)
FY27 Documents	- SOW for FY 27/29 grant cycle - Implementation Plan - living, breathing, editable version! - Agency Contact Sheet
Innovation/RFA Grantees	Evaluation Plan Draft - By July 30, 2026, please submit the Evaluation Plan you included with your RFA application. This will meet the requirements in the SOW deliverable. You can make edits based on review team feedback. Your PO will provide feedback and instructions.
TA Grantees	Important links and resources: • Training and Technical Assistance Plan informed by the TA Needs Assessment Findings (available from your PO provider) • Resource Submission Form to upload all recordings, materials, and resources to the grantee side of TobaccoFreeCO.org. • [Other relevant links]
*Any other type of grantee with unique onboarding requirements?	Project officers - [please add any other links that are appropriate for any of your grantees. If there is nothing to add, please delete this row.]

Key Resources

Resource	Notes / Access
Tobacco Free Colorado (TFCO)	Tobacco Free Colorado (TFCO) Grantee Site is an important resource for STEPP grantees, as it contains key links, guidance documents, training modules, the STEPP calendar, and more. This is a password-protected site. A new interface will launch by the end of Q1 FY27

Grantee Google Drive	The STEPP Grantee Google Drive for Digital and Social Media Resources hosts a variety of digital and social media resources. We are in the process of streamlining what lives here versus at TFCO!
STEPP Newsletter	The STEPP Newsletter is sent via email to grantees on the third Thursday of each month. It contains important announcements, links to register for events and training, grantee success stories, and more!
Training & Technical Assistance Providers	Grantees are not alone in this work. STEPP funds a robust network of Training and Technical Assistance Providers who are experts in specific areas of tobacco and other nicotine prevention, education, and cessation work. Set up 1-on-1 calls with TA providers to get to know one another and learn more about the support they provide. Review the STEPP TA Ecosystem document to understand everyone's roles and responsibilities, including those of grantees, STEPP Subject Matter Experts, Project Officers, and Training and Technical Assistance Providers.
Learning Community Calls	STEPP TA Providers, along with STEPP Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) host quarterly Learning Community Calls (LCCs), typically organized by strategy area. You are welcome and encouraged to attend as many as you're able to! LCCs are announced in the STEPP Newsletter and in emails directly from TA Providers.
Training Videos	Check out these important training videos on TFCO: • Amendment 35 Ecosystem • Colorado 2030 Strategic Plan • Tobacco Control 101 • Tobacco-Free CO Resources for Grantees • The Right Media for Your Goals
STEPP Data Dashboards	• Healthy Kids Colorado Survey • CO Health Viz (Healthy Kids Colorado Survey (HKCS), Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), Pregnancy Assessment and Monitoring System (PRAMS) data by Health Statistics Region) • The Tobacco Retail Access Colorado (TRAC) system is a web-based dashboard and mapping application for viewing the locations of licensed tobacco retailers, recent compliance checks/inspections, and underage sale violations across Colorado, including by county and local jurisdiction. Learn more at TRAC Landing Page • TRAC Dashboard

Paid Media Plan	If you are using STEPP funds to place/buy media locally, please use the Paid Media Placement Review Form to submit your media request. To learn more about what requires a media plan and a review from the STEPP team, please refer to the STEPP Grantee Media Plan Guidance. We aim to review all submissions within 5-7 business days. Please note: If you are not using STEPP funds to place this buy, you are not required to submit this form.
Frederic Printing	Starting in late July 2026, the STEPP printing platform will provide access to a variety of educational and compliance materials, including tobacco- and nicotine-free signage, brochures, and medicaid resources. Grantees can request access to the portal by visiting the STEPP Storefront. Account approvals are typically processed within 48–72 hours. The printing inventory is regularly updated with new resources as they become available.

Onboarding Checklist

Use this checklist to track your onboarding progress. All required items must be completed within the timeframes below. Your PO is here to help if you have any questions along the way.

✓	Task
☐	Attend your first STEPP/grantee Check-In call to meet your main point of contact!
☐	Schedule recurring STEPP PO grantee Check-In meetings.
☐	Review this Onboarding Guide and the relevant documents linked throughout, including the CO 2030 Strategic Plan, the FY27-29 LPHA or Community-Led Grantee (CLG) Framework, and the TA Ecosystem.
☐	Schedule a virtual orientation with PO to review this Guide and answer any questions.
☐	Gain access to the Tobacco Free Colorado (TFCO) website [password required — Project Officer emails Darcey for logins]

✓	Task
☐	Access the Grantee Google Drive. Please let your PO know if the link above doesn't get you access.
☐	Review quarterly reporting process and budgets with PO.
☐	Gain access to STEPP Newsletter [PO emailed Ops Team to confirm new grantee contact changes and communication updates] Use this link to sign up for the newsletter.
☐	Register for relevant events announced in the STEPP Newsletter - STEPP Update Calls (1st Wednesday every other month) - Tobacco Review Committee meetings (3rd Friday monthly) - Learning Community Calls (varied) You can also refer to the Grantee Calendar on TobaccoFreeCO
☐	Work with PO to set up meetings with relevant TA Providers.
☐	Complete the Practicing Cultural Humility Training by STEPP's Health Equity TA provider by December 31, 2026.
☐	Submit a signed, completed STEPP Onboarding checklist for each staff member no later than three (3) months after contract execution, or no later than three (3) months after hire for staff members hired after contract execution.

Reporting & Invoicing

As a STEPP grantee, your agency is required to submit regular progress reports and invoices. Your PO will walk you through the specifics.

Quarterly Reporting	Grantees submit Quarterly Progress Reports (QPRs) on October 15, January 15, April 15, and July 15th, and Annual Reports are submitted with Quarter 4's QPR on July 15th. QPR links are sent to grantees by CEPEG, our Data and Evaluation TA Provider, on the first of the month. The user interface for the QPRs can be a little finicky, so we recommend drafting responses in a separate document, rather than on the platform itself. If it would be helpful, we can send you a Word Doc template.
Budget Guidance	Please see the FY27 STEPP Budget Guidance document to learn about appropriate use of State Tobacco Education, Prevention and Cessation Grant funds. We are all stewards of these public funds and responsible for ensuring they are spent in accordance with Colorado law and STEPP program standards.
Invoices	Invoices are due 45 days after the close of each month. This is typically completed by the grantee's fiscal team.

Questions? We're Here to Help.

Onboarding can feel like a lot at first — and that is completely normal! Your STEPP Project Officer is your go-to resource for any questions, big or small. Please don't hesitate to reach out. We're so excited to have you as part of the STEPP network, and we look forward to collaborating with you in this work!

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Grantee Signature

Date

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Subcontractor Signature (as appropriate)

Date

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STEPP PO Staff Signature

Date