

# Program Narrative Instructions

## Purpose

- To document the program's objectives and identify the specific agency goal(s) the objectives support. The narrative also includes the performance measures such as: inputs, outputs, efficiency, outcomes and quality. In addition, the program narrative should be used to provide highly detailed information regarding request priorities and significant Issues.

## Getting Started

In the left-margin menu, under **Narratives**, click "**Program Narrative**".

- **Budget Cycle** defaults to the current cycle.
- Select **Agency**, **Division** (if applicable), and **Version** from the options that have been assigned to you (see Time-Saver Tip on the right margin).

1. Select a **narrative tab** and click **Edit** to begin entering information. The Program Narrative screen contains four tabs. See the Narrative Content section below for content instructions on each tab.

- The narrative tab currently selected appears in the **information bar**.
- Narrative tabs with two edit windows are limited to a minimum and maximum number of characters as defined on the screen. Text in the limited edit windows should be viewed as a summary of what is presented in the second, unlimited text window. The limited window is intended to be included in various standardized reports that will be generated from the system, such as the Governor's budget recommendations.
- The **Program Description**, **Program Objectives**, and **Performance Measures** tabs contain two edit windows. The **Request Priorities and Significant Issues** tab provides a single unlimited edit window.

### Start-Up TIP

If any of the drop-down menus fail to show expected choices, you may need to have your **Security** settings adjusted.

Contact your agency administrator or the State Budget Division for assistance.

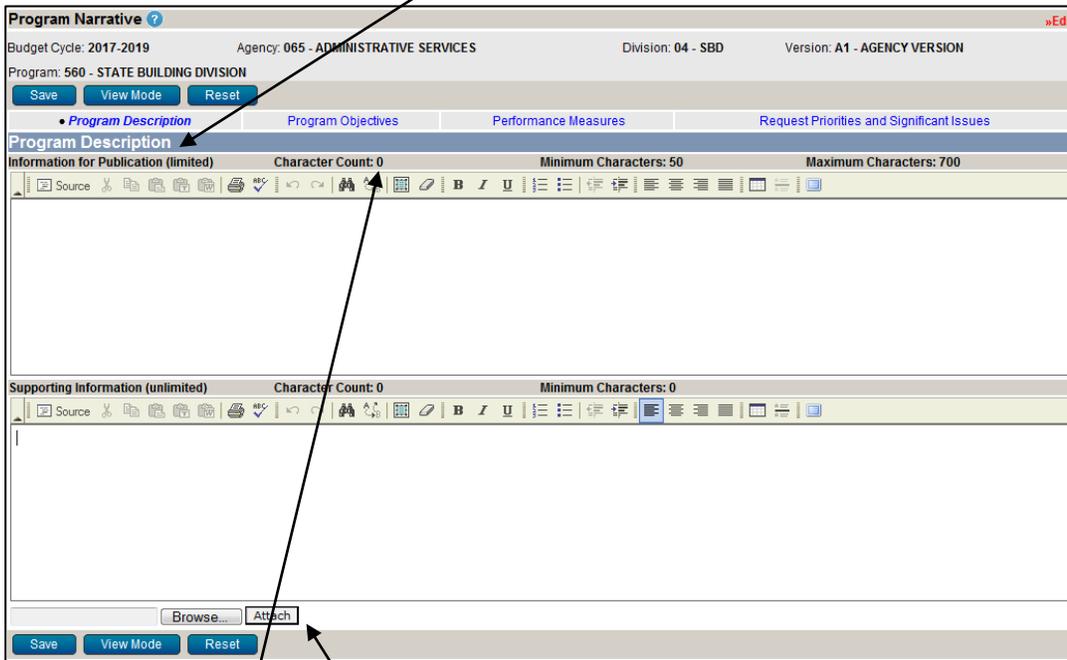
### Time-Saver TIP

Set default options to avoid repetitive selections of **Agency** and **Version**.

Go to **User Options** in the upper right corner of any screen. Once your selections are made, press **Save**.

### Formatting TIP

Avoid the use of **hard returns** when entering narrative text. Using hard returns prevents normal text "wrap" and hinders publication.



- The **Character Count** shows how many characters are in the edit window and will update when **Save** is clicked.
- If the number of characters in the section exceeds the **Maximum Characters** allowed then the information will **NOT** be saved but the **Character Count** will be updated. Reduce the number of characters to under the maximum, then save.
- Use the edit window **button bar** for standard word processing features. If any of the buttons look unfamiliar, point your mouse over the icon for a description of that feature. The **Maximize the Editor Size** button simply toggles you back and forth from full-screen editor mode to the normal screen.
- **Copy and Paste** text into the edit windows using either the Ctrl-C and Ctrl-V functions (i.e., pressing the Control key and the V key at the same time) or the **Copy** and **Paste** buttons on the left side of the edit window's button bar. To provide consistent formatting, a standard font style and size will be applied upon clicking **Save**.
- **Attach supporting files** (e.g., organizational chart graphics, picture/sound files, etc.) by clicking the **Browse...** button to locate the desired file and then clicking the **Attach** button. Attachments should not be referenced in the limited, Information for Publication edit window as the attachments will not be included with all reports.

**CAUTION:** You must click **Save** whenever exiting a screen or risk losing unsaved data. Save frequently to avoid data loss.

# Program Narrative Instructions

## Program Narrative Content

The biennial State budget process is intended to support the development of budget requests within a strategic results-based process. The agency's program narrative should describe the program, state program objectives, provide performance measures, present request priorities and identify significant issues.

- **Program Description** – A comprehensive description of the program and its purpose.
- **Program Objectives** - The desired results to be accomplished by the program over the next two bienniums with the efforts and resources of this program, subprograms and services. Identify the strategies and actions planned to achieve those objectives.
- **Performance Measures** - The measures used by the agency to determine the cost, efficiency, effectiveness, and results of this program over the next four fiscal years. These measures should include at least one each of the following:
  - a) *Inputs*-resources used to provide goods or services;
  - b) *Outputs*-amount of goods or services provided;
  - c) *Efficiency*-cost of labor or materials per unit of goods or services provided;
  - d) *Outcomes/Results*-extent to which program objectives were achieved; and
  - e) *Quality*-extent to which customer requirements or satisfaction have been achieved.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** To further highlight the importance of the development and documentation of an agency's key performance indicators, the Administrative Services State Budget Division has developed an Excel template to facilitate the entry and submission of performance measures for each budget program. The template is available at <http://budget.nebraska.gov/instructions.html> in the "Part A – Narratives" section under the link to the Program Narrative Instructions. The "attachment" functionality on the Performance Measures tab of the Program Narrative screen is available for submission of the performance measures Excel template file for each respective budget program. A file naming convention that includes the program number, such as "Prog509 performance measures", is requested as it will aid in file organization.

Elements/columns of the template are as follows:

- **Sequence** – a column available for a user determined sort order (optional)
  - **Ag#** - the agency number as assigned by the budget appropriations bills (required)
  - **Prog#** - the budget program number as assigned by the budget appropriations bills (required)
  - **Subprog#** - the subprogram number as determined by the agency for financial monitoring purposes (optional)
  - **Performance Indicator Description** – a easily understood general description of the performance measure; ideally a description that will allow a layperson to understand the activity (required)
  - **Category** – use items a) through e) above under performance measures (required)
  - **Type** – indicate the format of the quantitative measures; i.e. numeric, percent, other (required)
  - **Historical Measures** – indicate the actual quantitative value that resulted from the agency's activities for each year (required, to the extent available)
  - **Current Year** – indicate the projected quantitative value that will be the result of the agency's activities (required)
  - **Future Measures** – indicate the projected quantitative value that will be the result of the agency's activities based on the requested level of funding (required)
  - **Request Issue(s)** – a cross reference to any budget request Issues that will have a direct impact on the performance measure (required, if applicable)
  - **Budget Mod(s)** – a cross reference to any budget modifications that will have a direct impact on the performance measure (required, if applicable)
  - **Positive Measure Impact** – short narrative on the positive consequences if performance objective is achieved (required)
  - **Negative Measure Impact** – short narrative on the negative consequences if performance objective is not achieved (required)
- **Request Priorities and Significant Issues** - In addition to describing request priorities and budget request Issues that require additional program funding, any proposed redirection of existing resources should also be described. Also, identify significant internal or external forces that will affect program performance.