



# **Quality Assurance Team**

## Policies and Procedures Manual

*Version 2.2*

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## Chapter 1: Background

The Texas Legislature established the Quality Assurance Team (QAT) to provide ongoing oversight of major information resources projects that receive appropriations. The 73rd Legislature’s enactment of Article V, Section 133, General Appropriations Act (effective September 1, 1993), created the QAT. The provisions creating QAT were later codified in the Information Resources Management Act (Texas Government Code, Chapter 2054), which requires the Comptroller of Public Accounts (CPA), the Department of Information Resources (DIR), the Legislative Budget Board (LBB), and the State Auditor’s Office (SAO) to create a QAT to perform duties specified in the Act and other law; specify in writing the responsibilities of CPA, DIR, LBB, and SAO; and create an automated project review system (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.158(a)). The Information Resources Management Act specifies that SAO serves on the QAT in an advisory role (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.158(c)). Pursuant to the Act, the QAT Charter details CPA, SAO, LBB, and DIR responsibilities.

### What Is QAT?

The Quality Assurance Team (QAT) is an interagency workgroup established to provide ongoing oversight of “major information resources projects” as defined in Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 2054. All state agencies are subject to QAT oversight including Institutes of Higher Education that are assigned additional monitoring under Texas Government Code, Section 2261.258(a)(1).



Figure 1 - QAT Members

QAT members include the Comptroller of Public Accounts (CPA), the Department of Information Resources (DIR), and the Legislative Budget Board (LBB). The State Auditor’s Office (SAO) serves in an advisory role for QAT.

## QAT Charter

The QAT Charter establishes a common understanding of QAT authority and responsibilities, and each Quality Assurance Team representative agrees to rely on the Charter as the basis for determining and fulfilling all actions executed on behalf of the QAT. The QAT Charter states:

- Each of the four entities is required to appoint one representative to QAT. CPA's appointed representative will provide reviews for solicitations and framework deliverables.
- DIR's appointed representative will provide QAT input from a technology and project management perspective.
- LBB's appointed representative will provide QAT input from a legislative budgeting perspective.
- SAO's appointed representative will provide QAT input from an independent advisory perspective. SAO may perform non-audit service projects at the request and on behalf of QAT.
- One representative of QAT is required to serve as a facilitator to ensure focus on fulfilling QAT's responsibilities. The facilitator's responsibilities include scheduling and presiding over QAT meetings; preparing and forwarding meeting agendas in advance of meetings; and coordinating meetings with agencies.
- Each QAT representative, or their respective entity, is authorized to designate one or more analysts to fulfill responsibilities as approved by QAT.
- LBB is required to provide administrative support to ensure that QAT's responsibilities are fulfilled in an efficient manner. The administrative assistant's responsibilities include the preparation and distribution of minutes and other materials, as appropriate, for each QAT meeting.

## Oversight Authority

### Which Projects Are Subject to QAT Oversight?

All major information resources projects initiated by a state agency are subject to QAT oversight. "State agency" is defined as a department, commission, board, office, council, authority, or other agency in the executive or judicial branch of state government that is created by the constitution or a statute of Texas, including a university system or institution of higher education (IHE) (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.003(13)).

A "major information resources project" is any information resources technology project identified in a state agency's Biennial Operation Plan (BOP) that:

- Is specifically identified as such by the Legislature in the General Appropriations Act; or
- Has development costs of \$5.0 million or greater and:
  - Requires one or more years to reach operational status; or
  - Involves more than one state agency; or
  - Substantially alters work methods of state agency personnel or the delivery of services to clients.

The term also includes any information resources technology project of a state agency designated for additional monitoring under Texas Government Code, [Section 2261.258\(a\)\(1\)](#), if the development costs for the project exceed \$5 million (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.003(10)).

### **Authority References**

QAT's oversight authority pertains to state agency, university system, and institutions of higher education (IHE) major information resources projects.

**Each state agency is required to submit a BOP to QAT (as well as to the DIR, LBB, SAO, and the governor) each state fiscal biennium (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.100(a)).**

QAT oversight is based on the submission and approval of an agency's BOP. For additional information regarding BOPs, please consult the [LBB website](#).

Subsequent to September 1, 2014, an institution of higher education is not required to prepare or submit a plan or report generally required of a state agency under the Information Resources Management Act (Texas Government Code, Chapter 2054) except to the extent expressly provided by a rule adopted by DIR on or after September 1, 2013 (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.1211). Additionally, an institution of higher education's BOP is required to include only operational projects and infrastructure projects, and statutory provisions providing instructions for preparing the plan are prohibited from requiring the plan of an institution of higher education to include other projects (Texas Government Code, 2054.100(d)).

Subsequent to September 1, 2021, QAT oversight may apply to any information resources technology project of an institute of higher education assigned additional monitoring pursuant to Texas Government Code, Section 2261.258(a)(1), if the development costs for the project exceed \$5.0 million.

## Chapter 2: Responsibilities

### QAT General Duties

The Texas Government Code and the General Appropriations Act specify QAT's general duties, including reviews, evaluations, and reports.

### Reviews

#### **Texas Project Delivery Framework ([Link to Framework](#))**

QAT review of a project's Business Case, Business Case Workbook, and Statewide Impact Analysis is required before a state agency may expend appropriated funds for a major information resources project (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.118(d); Eighty-seventh Legislature, 2022-2023 General Appropriations Act (GAA), 2022-2023 Biennium, Article IX, Section 9.02(b)).

#### **Contracts/Amendments**

**QAT review is required for a state agency contract for development of a major information resources project (MIRP) with a value expected to exceed \$10 million (Eighty-seventh Legislature, GAA, 2022–23 Biennium, Article IX, Section 9.01(d)).**

**QAT review is also required for an amendment of a state agency contract with a value that exceeds \$10.0 million to be valid when:**

- The expected total value of the contract subsequent to the amendment exceeds the total value of the initial contract awarded by 10 percent or more;
- Or the expected total value of an element in the contract subsequent to the amendment exceeds the total value of the same element in the initial contract awarded by 10 percent or more (Eighty-seventh Legislature, GAA, 2022–23 Biennium, Article IX, Section 9.01(f)).

**QAT may request at any time to review any contract or amendment related to a MIRP, a possible MIRP, or any contract or amendment associated with any legislative rider assigned to the QAT.**

### Evaluations

QAT is required to evaluate major information resources projects to determine whether:

- The projects are operating on time and within budget (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.1181(d));
- The risks associated with the project are being mitigated appropriately;
- The final results of the projects meet expected outcomes and outputs (Eighty-seventh Legislature, GAA, 2022-23 Biennium, Article IX, Section 9.02(h)).

### Reports

QAT is required to report annually on the status of projects in the state's major information resources project portfolio to state leadership (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.1183).

## Comptroller General Duties for QAT

### Reviews

The Chief Procurement Officer of Texas, a CPA employee, is required to coordinate with QAT. The Chief Procurement Officer is authorized to review major contract solicitations (that is, solicitations for a contract with a value of at least \$5.0 million) for information resources projects monitored by QAT (Texas Government Code, Section 2155.091(b)(4)). The Chief Procurement Officer is required to coordinate with QAT to conduct such a review and make appropriate recommendations to CPA and the Legislature based on the reviews. While the Chief Procurement Officer is granted the authority to review major contract solicitations, DIR or the appropriate state agency retains the authority to award a statewide information resources contract as authorized by law (Texas Government Code, Section 2155.091(d)).

## DIR General Duties for QAT

### Coordination/Consultation

DIR or its executive director is required to coordinate or consult with QAT. DIR also is required to coordinate with QAT to develop contracting standards for information resources technologies acquisition and purchased services (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.051(h)(1)).

### Reviews

DIR, in consultation with QAT (as well as the Information Technology Council for Higher Education and LBB), is required to review existing statutes, procedures, data, and organizational structures to identify opportunities to increase efficiency, customer service, and transparency in information resources technologies (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.066(a)).

DIR is also responsible for maintaining the Statewide Project Automated Reporting (SPAR) system in which all state agencies provide defined information regarding project status for all MIRPs at a frequency assigned by the QAT. SPAR is the system of record for all information submitted by the agencies, and DIR uses it to conduct analysis and reporting on the information provided to determine an individual project's risk.

### Oversight

Texas Government Code, Section 2054.1181, requires DIR to provide "additional oversight services" for all major information resources projects within agencies designated by SAO as "additional monitoring warranted." Details regarding these procedures/services can be found in Texas Administrative Code, [Chapter 216](#).

For more information regarding additional monitoring procedures, see [Additional Oversight for Agencies Assigned Additional Monitoring](#).

### Reports

DIR's executive director, in coordination with QAT (as well as state agency information resources managers), is required to prepare the State Strategic Plan for information resources management for review and approval by DIR's governing board (Texas Government Code,



Section 2054.092(a)). The State Strategic Plan is the roadmap for all Texas state agencies to align with when developing the information technology components of their agency strategic plans.

## **LBB General Duties for QAT**

### **Reviews**

The LBB reviews and approves a state agency's BOP following a legislative session. LBB approval is contingent on the Legislature appropriating funds for proposed projects.

### **Public Dashboard**

The LBB maintains a [Public Dashboard](#) that provides state leadership and agencies and the public the ability to view online the details and progress of statewide agency MIRPs.

## **SAO General Duties for QAT**

SAO serves as a nonvoting member of QAT and delegates to the LBB voting authority on any QAT decisions regarding the expenditure of appropriated funds because approving agency expenditures for MIRPs affects SAO's compliance with certain auditing standards.

### **Reviews**

SAO, at the request of QAT, may conduct a non-audit service project of state agency major information resources projects. A project is initiated by QAT when project performance, project completion, or other issues are identified during monitoring. See [SAO Project Reviews](#) for more details on the process.

## Chapter 3: MIRP Designation Process

### MIRP Portfolio

To perform its general duties, QAT maintains a portfolio of the state's major information resources projects. A major information resources project is added to the portfolio when QAT receives information that a state agency intends to pursue such a project, and a project is removed from the portfolio when the project either submits its Post-Implementation Review of Business Outcomes or is cancelled.

### Designating a Project for the MIRP Portfolio

#### Methods

Although QAT may identify projects for inclusion in the portfolio through multiple methods, the QAT's primary source of information used to add projects to the portfolio is a state agency's BOP, including BOP amendments.

#### Risk Designation

Once a project is added to state's major information resources project portfolio, QAT assigns it a risk status. QAT updates the project's risk status as the project progresses.

#### Notification Process

Regardless of the source QAT uses to identify major information resources projects, QAT notifies an agency when one of its projects is added to the state's QAT portfolio via email and official letter.

### Cancelling a Project for the MIRP Portfolio

In the event a MIRP requires cancellation, the QAT requires the following actions to be taken to remove the project from the agency's portfolio. Until all steps have been completed by the agency, the project will remain in the MIRP portfolio, and the agency will continue to be subject to all required project reporting and monitoring.

To initiate official project closure/portfolio removal, the agency must submit the following:

- An official letter on agency letterhead from the Chief Information Officer (CIO) detailing the date by which the decision to cancel the project was made and the governing body that made the decision.
- The letter also must include the following information:
  - The specific circumstances leading to the decision to cancel the project.
  - The date the project intends to complete closing activities.
  - The details regarding final QAT reporting requirements, disposition of remaining deliverables, a communications plan, contract cancellation actions, team members' reassignments, project/contract documentation archival activities, and the lessons learned compilation.

After reviewing the submitted letter, QAT will send a response confirming the project cancellation and removal of the project from the agency's MIRP portfolio.

## Chapter 4: MIRP Framework Documentation Review and Approval Processes

### BOP

**A state agency is prohibited from spending appropriated funds for a major information resources project until the LBB has approved it as part of the agency's BOP, and the QAT has reviewed the project's Business Case, Business Case Workbook, and Statewide Impact Analysis** (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.118(a); Eighty-seventh Legislature, GAA, 2022–23 Biennium, Article IX, Section 9.01(b)).

The LBB is required to approve a state agency's BOP no later than September 1 following a legislative session. LBB approval is contingent on the Legislature appropriating funds for proposed projects.

### Agencies

Each state agency is required to submit a BOP to the Legislative Budget Board, QAT, and the governor each biennium as required by and following the standards prescribed in Texas Government Code, Section 2054.100(a and b)). The plan is required to describe the agency's current and proposed projects for the biennium. DIR's governing board adopts rules as necessary to establish its standards. DIR, in addition to the Information Technology Council for Higher Education, also consults with LBB to establish criteria to evaluate BOPs. According to Texas Government Code, Section 2054.100, that criteria includes:

1. The feasibility of proposed information resources projects for the biennium;
2. The consistency of the BOP with the state strategic plan;
3. The appropriate provision of public electronic access to information;
4. Evidence of business process streamlining and gathering of business and technical requirements; and
5. Services, costs, and benefits.

### IHEs

If an institution of higher education is identified by the State Auditor's office to be an agency subject to "additional monitoring," it is their responsibility to notify the QAT of any IT development projects.

### Texas Project Delivery Framework

The **Texas Project Delivery Framework** (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.301 et seq.) provides general guidelines for the creation and submission of documents pertaining to major information resources projects. A state agency is required to submit the Business Case, Workbook, and Statewide Impact Analysis documents to QAT when the agency files its legislative appropriations request in LBB's Automated Budget and Evaluation System of Texas

(ABEST) each even-numbered year (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.303(b)). The QAT reviews all Business Case/Workbooks for major information resources projects subsequent to LBB approval of the BOP. **For projects included in an amendment to a state agency's BOP, QAT is required to review project documentation within 30 days of the date LBB approves the amendment.**

### Project Phases

All MIRPs follow the Texas Project Delivery Framework as provided by DIR. The Framework comprises the following five steps, or phases:

1. **Initiate** - In this step, the project's scope and budget are defined (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.303).
2. **Plan** – In this step, the project's scope, budget, schedule, and deliverables are finalized and plans are defined to guide the project through execution and closure.
3. **Execute** – In this step, typically the longest—the project's deliverables are built and presented to the project sponsor(s) for approval.
4. **Monitor and Control** – In this step, the project progress is tracked, reviewed, and regulated.
5. **Closing** – In this step, project stakeholders compare planned project outcomes to actual results to determine what went right, what went wrong, and what lessons can be learned for future projects.

The MIRP review and approval process focuses on Step 1 – Initiate and Step 2- Plan.



Figure 2 - QAT MIRP Approval Process

Note: State agencies may be required to submit updated BOP information to initiate a project outside of the biennial budget cycle shown in the figure.

### Required Templates

DIR, in consultation with LBB, CPA, and SAO, develops and provides guidelines and forms for the documents required by the Framework (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.302(b)).

State agencies must prepare each document required by the Framework in a manner consistent with DIR guidelines (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.302(a)). A state agency is required to use the following templates, provided by DIR ([link to DIR Framework templates](#)), to ensure compliance:

1. Initiate

- a. **Business Case:** This is a narrative comparison of the business problem, solution costs, and expected project benefits/outcomes based on a business case analysis process. As a result of the 88th Legislature, Texas Government Code, Section 2054.003(2-a), defines “Business Case” as a comparison of business solution costs and project benefits based on a solution assessment and validation for a major information resources project.
- b. **Business Case Workbook:** This document provides detail regarding the quantified estimates of all project costs, both capital and non-capital, project benefits, and returns on investment. QAT requires agencies/IHEs to report all capital and non-capital costs associated with a major information resources project in the Business Case Workbook, entering costs as required in each field. All costs relating to a major information resource project, including costs for vendor services, agency personnel services, and agency personnel fringe benefits are required to be reported to QAT as part of project monitoring.
- c. **Statewide Impact Analysis:** This document contains an assessment of the project’s impact on the use of information technology resources across the state.
- d. **Technical Architecture Assessment:** This document reviews the proposed technical architecture for the project’s use of industry accepted standards. NOTE: The Technical Architecture Assessment is **only** required for agencies with an “additional monitoring” designation from the SAO if requested by QAT as described in Texas Government Code, Section 2261.258.

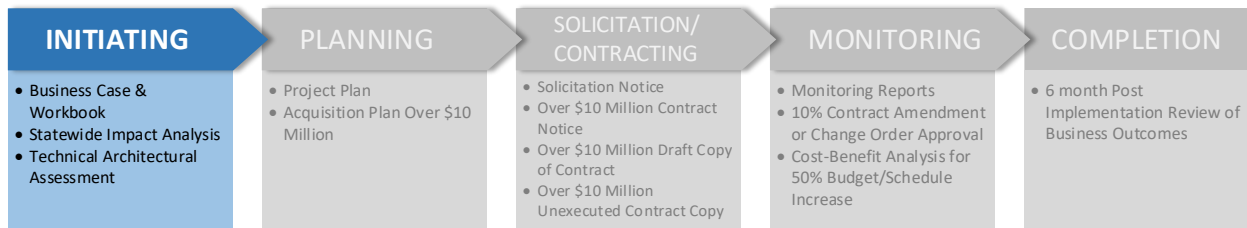


Figure 3 - Initiate Phase Required Framework Documentation

## 2. Plan

- a. **Project Plan:** This document builds on the general planning information contained in the Business Case, including more detail and specifics on monitoring and control methods, quality, communication, configuration, performance, and risk management. See [Project Plan Requirements](#) for more details.
- b. **Acquisition Plan:** This document contains the project’s procurement planning information for acquiring goods and/or services outside of the organization through management of solicitations, contracts, and other agreements with

external vendors. See [Acquisition Plan Requirements](#) for more details.

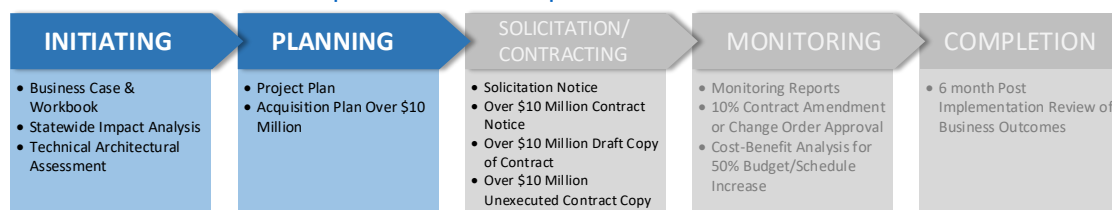


Figure 4 - Planning Phase Required Framework Documentation

## Submission Process

Completed Framework documents must be filed electronically with QAT via the Statewide Project Automated Reporting (SPAR) system and by email at [QAT@dir.texas.gov](mailto:QAT@dir.texas.gov). For information regarding SPAR, please contact [QAT@dir.texas.gov](mailto:QAT@dir.texas.gov).

## QAT's Framework Review Process

QAT may provide feedback on the framework documents submitted by a state agency before completing its review. In general, this feedback seeks to minimize project risk and ensures that benefits will outweigh any costs associated with the project. All requests from QAT to an agency should be answered within 5 business days unless otherwise arranged in advance with QAT.

**The Business Case and Business Case Workbook are required to be reviewed by QAT before a project may proceed.**

## QAT Risk Analysis Process

After the Legislature appropriates funds for a project, QAT performs a risk level review and analysis of documentation the agency provides and assigns a risk level accordingly. **QAT is required to analyze a major information resources project's risk** and make recommendations based on the analysis. QAT may, at their discretion, choose to waive the major information resources project review requirements for a project. The option to waive the review will be communicated via email and letter from the QAT.

When conducting a review, QAT is required to comply with DIR rules and guidelines. A state agency is required to provide QAT any information necessary for QAT to determine a project's potential risk (Article IX, Section 9.02(b), General Appropriations Act, 85th Legislature (2017)). QAT updates project risk status as a project progresses and updated project information is received.

## QAT Project Approval Process

QAT's letter to the agency (QAT Approval Letter) confirming the project's approval contains the following information: (1) the initial estimated project cost; (2) the initial planned start date; (3) the frequency with which Monitoring Reports are to be submitted to QAT; and (4) the due date for the first Monitoring Report. The Monitoring Report is due to QAT and submitted into SPAR within 30 days after the reporting period ends.

## Project Plan Requirements

Once the Business Case (Step 1) is submitted and QAT sends the QAT Approval Letter, agencies must complete a Project Plan. The Project Plan provides more detailed project planning information, such as monitoring and control methods and details on standards for project quality, communication, configuration, performance, and risk management. A Project Plan documents overall governance and provides a planning blueprint for both project management and technology-related activities and deliverables. The Project Plan should be updated and submitted to QAT throughout the duration of the project as needed.

The Project Plan should demonstrate how the agency considered incorporating into the project the applicable best practices recommended in the QAT Annual Report (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.304(d)). Additionally, a state agency contract for a major information resources project must comply with the requirements in CPA's Texas Procurement and Contract Management Guide (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.304(e)).

A "contract" includes a contract, grant, or agreement, including a revenue generating contract, an interagency or interlocal grant or agreement, demand, change order, purchase order or other written expression of terms of agreement or an amendment, modification, renewal, or extension of such for the purchase or sale of goods or services that was entered into or paid for, either in whole or in part, by a state agency or institution of higher education (2022-2023 GAA, 87th Legislature, Article IX, Sec. 7.04, and Texas Government Code, Chapter 2054).

State agencies are required to use the Statewide Project Delivery Framework Project Plan Template, provided by DIR ([link to Project Plan Template](#)), to comply with the above requirements.

**A state agency is required to file a Project Plan with QAT before the agency awards a contract or spends more than 10 percent of allocated funds for the project** (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.304(b)). In addition, for each contract for the development or implementation of a major information resources project with a value of at least \$10 million or involving an agency designated for "additional monitoring" by the SAO (Texas Government Code, Section 2261.258), **agencies are required to provide QAT with a Project Plan and an Acquisition Plan prior to awarding that contract.**

Agencies also are required to provide certain notices to the QAT for contracts associated with major information resources projects (see [Required Notices for Contracts](#) for details).

## Cloud Computing Requirements

When making a purchase for a major information resources project, an agency shall consider cloud computing service options, including any security benefits and cost savings associated with purchasing those service options from a cloud computing service provider and from a statewide technology center established by DIR (Texas Government Code, Section 2157.007(b-1)).



If an agency is unable to utilize cloud computing options due to integration limitations with legacy systems, security risks, or costs, the agency must provide that information detail within the Business Case narrative and the Project Plan describing the purchase and the agency's reasoning for ruling out cloud computing for the purchase to QAT at least 14 days before the solicitation (Texas Government Code, Section 2157.007(b)).

## Acquisition Plan Requirements

Many QAT-monitored projects involve the acquisition of technology related goods and/or services from vendors, and often, those major information resource projects involve multiple procurements. The Acquisition Plan helps QAT understand how a particular state agency will define the parties' roles, measure vendor performance, and control changes to a project's scope.

Before issuing a vendor solicitation for a project with a value of at least \$10 million, agencies are required to develop the following, consistent with the Texas Procurement and Contract Management Guide:

- A procurement plan with anticipated service levels and performance standards for each vendor; and
- A method to monitor changes to the scope of each contract (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.305).

A state agency may also use DIR's Statewide Project Delivery Framework Acquisition Plan Template (link to [Acquisition Plan Template](#)) to comply with the above requirement. If the major information resources project involves a procurement subject to QAT review, an Acquisition Plan must be kept in the procurement file. Once an Acquisition Plan is filed with QAT, an agency may proceed with forming solicitations.

Agencies assigned a rating of "additional monitoring warranted" under Texas Government Code, Section 2261.258(a)(1), are required to provide an Acquisition Plan for all MIRPs (Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 216).

## Required Notices for Contracts

State agencies are required to notify QAT for the solicitation and award of all contracts pertaining to major information resources projects. First, **a state agency is required to notify QAT when the agency advertises a request for proposal, request for offers, or other similar process common to participation in the competitive bidding processes of a major information resources project.** The agency is also required to provide the requisition number at the time of notification (Eighty-seventh Legislature, GAA, 2022–23 Biennium, Article IX, Section 9.02(c)(2)). Finally, **a state agency is required to notify QAT within 10 business days of when the agency awards a contract for any major information resources project.** (Eighty-seventh Legislature, GAA, 2022–23 Biennium, Article IX, Section 9.02(c)(3)).

## QAT's Two-Step Review Process for MIRP Contracts

**QAT must review major information resources project contracts valued over \$10 million at two points before contract execution.** QAT reviews contracts for consistency with the best practices established by the Texas Contract Management Guide and the State of Texas Procurement Manual, with the goal of minimizing contractual risk and ensuring project funds are spent consistent with Legislative intent for appropriated funds. QAT may provide feedback on the contract document or may waive the contract review requirement at its discretion.

Step 1. For each contract for the development or implementation of a major information resources project with a value of at least \$10 million, a state agency must submit the first draft proposed terms of the contract to QAT for review **prior to the start of negotiations**. The agency may commence negotiations after submission of the contract draft to QAT. (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.160(a)(1)).

Step 2. For negotiated contracts from step 1 above, a state agency must also submit the final negotiated, unsigned contract to QAT for review (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.160(a)(2)). QAT will review and provide recommendations on the final unsigned negotiated contract (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.158(b)(4)). The QAT makes every effort to provide comments by 30 business days after submission by an agency. This process cannot be expedited. Submitting the final draft in redline, indicating changes from the original draft helps the QAT ensure it can complete its review within 30 business days. There is no statutory requirement for the QAT to complete the review within any defined time period. Agencies are required to develop procurement timelines including all required reviews and the full number of days for review as part of their Acquisition Plan. Any delays in a project's procurement will not result in an expedited review by the QAT.

After receiving the QAT recommendations, the agency must submit a response that details the final determination of each QAT recommendation. The agency will either indicate acceptance of recommendation(s) or provide explanation why the recommendation is not applicable to the project (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.160(b)). The agency must provide this required response to QAT comments **prior to final contract execution**.

Finally, a state agency is required to notify QAT within 10 business days of when the agency awards a contract for any major information resources project, regardless of value (Eighty-seventh Legislature, GAA, 2022–23 Biennium, Article IX, Section 9.02(c)(3)).



Figure 5 - Executing Phase: Solicitation/Contracting Requirements

## Amending a Contract for Development of a Major Information Resources Project and Other Significant Changes

Several requirements pertain to amending a contract for the development of a major information resources project. First, **a state agency is required to notify QAT (as well as the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the House, Senate Finance Committee, House Appropriations Committee) prior to amending a contract for development of a major information resources project when the expected total value of the contract subsequent to the amendment exceeds the total value of the initial contract awarded by 10 percent or more** (Eighty- seventh Legislature, GAA, 2022–23 Biennium, Article IX, Section 9.01(e)).

Second, **an amendment to a major information resources project development contract with a total value that exceeds \$5.0 million must be reported to QAT when:**

- The expected total value of the contract subsequent to the amendment exceeds the total value of the initial contract awarded by 10 percent or more; or
- The expected total of an element in the contract subsequent to the amendment exceeds the total value of the same element in the initial contract awarded by 10 percent or more
- The amendment requires the vendor to provide consultative services, technical expertise, or other assistance in defining project scope or deliverables (Eighty-seventh Legislature, GAA, 2022–23 Biennium, Article IX, Section 9.01(f)).

For the amendments described in this section, a state agency is required to:

- Complete and submit to QAT the DIR Contract Amendment and Change Order Approval (CACOA) Template (link to [CACOA Template](#)) **and**
- Submit to QAT the unsigned, final version of the proposed contract amendment.
- Additionally, DIR guidelines require a state agency to submit an updated version of the Business Case Template if the current expected project cost exceeds the initial expected project cost by 10 percent or more, whether or not the increase in expected cost is a result of a contract amendment.
- Each agency is required to obtain QAT approval of the CACOA **prior to executing the amendment.**

## Cost-Benefit Analysis

A cost-benefit analysis is required when certain thresholds are met:

Any MIRP with a contract valued at \$10 million or more that requires an amendment exceeding the original contract amount by 10% or more is prohibited from using funds appropriated in the Texas General Appropriations Act to pay for a **contract** for goods or services unless it conducts a cost-benefit analysis to compare canceling or continuing the **contract** related to a major information resource project subject to QAT monitoring (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.1181(j)1).

Additionally, if a state agency cancels a contract for development of a major information resources project, which if amended would be subject to the above specified requirements, and issues a new solicitation for identical or similar goods and/or services for development of the same project, then the resulting contract must be submitted to QAT prior to execution (Eighty-seventh Legislature, GAA, 2022–23 Biennium, Article IX, Section 9.01(h)).

Further, agencies must make a good faith effort to identify and execute savings and efficiencies in their use of contracted goods and services. An agency or institution of higher education may not use funds appropriated elsewhere in this Act to pay for a contract for goods or services unless it conducts a cost-benefit analysis to compare canceling or continuing any major information resource **project** and related contracts subject to QAT monitoring **that is more than 50 percent over budget or over schedule**. QAT must approve the cost-benefit analysis for the project to continue. If this requirement is not met, corrective actions in Article IX, Section 9.02, apply (Eighty-seventh Legislature, GAA, 2022–23 Biennium, Article IX, Section 17.09(c)2).

Finally, in lieu of reviewing an amendment or a related contract pursuant to the procedures specified, QAT is authorized to waive the requirements by providing written notice to the state agency seeking review of the amendment or contract (Eighty-seventh Legislature, GAA, 2022–23 Biennium, Article IX, Section 9.01(i)).

## Chapter 5: MIRP Monitoring

### Monitoring Requirements

Unless waived, QAT requires a state agency/IHE to:

- Quantitatively define the expected outcomes and outputs for each major information resources project at the outset;
- Monitor cost, schedule and milestones;
- Notify the QAT of any changes to the project's schedule, scope, costs, or milestones, and provide documentation aligned with the project's stated change management process as outlined in the approved QAT Project Plan;
- Describe all risks/issues impacting the project, and the specific mitigation plans for each;
- Evaluate the final results to determine whether expectations have been met (Eighty-seventh Legislature, GAA, 2022–23 Biennium, Article IX, Section 9.02(h)3).

Additionally, for the entire life cycle of each major information resources project, QAT is required to monitor and report on defined performance indicators (developed by DIR) for each project, including schedule, cost, scope, and quality (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.159(a)).

QAT is also required to closely monitor monitoring reports for MIRPs, based on criteria developed by DIR, to determine whether to initiate corrective action for the projects (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.1181(e)(1)).

### QAT Monitoring Process

QAT maintains a Project Portfolio Report as a baseline of projects included in the state's project portfolio. The QAT Annual Report is published in December of each year, and it provides a snapshot of project information and detail on trends, recommendations, and agency performance including the project statuses as they progress through the quality assurance review cycle.

Projects are monitored after a project is reviewed by QAT. Although QAT sets a monitoring schedule at the time a project review is completed, **QAT reserves the right to change the reporting frequency based on various factors.** QAT will notify an agency of any changes made to the monitoring schedule via email and letter.

Once the project is initiated, project performance is monitored for the project duration. State agencies are required to provide regular project updates as determined by QAT in the Statewide Project Automated Reporting (SPAR) system. All agencies must provide their monitoring reports both in searchable PDF format using the required [Monitoring Report Template](#), as well as manually entering the required project information into SPAR.

In each MIRP's initial Monitoring Report, agencies are required to enter the defined milestones from the approved Business Case or Project Plan into the report's Section 3 Milestones table. Agencies are required to define Planned Start and End Dates for each milestone at project

initiation. The purpose of adding initial planned dates is to enable comparison of a project's initial goals to actual completion dates. Once these milestones have been provided, the Planned Start and End Dates cannot be changed within Section 3 of the project's Monitoring Report without the submission of a formal project change document, following the agency change process as described in the QAT Project Plan, or a Revised Business Case. Agencies should enter the Actual Start and End Dates for each milestone as they are achieved.

Adding to or removing milestones in the Monitoring Report must be documented using the agency's defined change request process as provided in their Project Plan. QAT may request this documentation at any time.

QAT may request the SAO to perform a non-audit service [project](#), to identify the cause of any performance issues that arise during project monitoring.

QAT sets up each project and its respective agency in SPAR, notifies the agency of the addition, and tracks the key project details information provided in SPAR, including, but not limited to:

- Overall project status
- Performance indicators, including schedule, cost, scope, and quality.
- Milestone changes/progress
- Risks/Issues/Changes status
- Initial/Current Estimated Project Cost
- Initial/Current Estimated Project Start and Finish Dates

All changes to project milestones, scope, and increases to project end date or cost made after initiation must be documented using the agency's defined change management process as shared in the project's QAT Project Plan, with details on the approval date. The QAT may request at any time the documentation confirming the approvals for these changes.

The QAT may also request a meeting or further clarification/additional documentation on any items in any monitoring report that require more information.

The final SPAR update that a state agency submits is required to contain the final (actual) project cost and finish date. The project's final cost and finish date should be entered along with the project's Post-Implementation Review of Business Outcomes within six months after the project ends. See [Post-Implementation Review of Business Outcomes \(PIRBO\)](#) for more details on completing the document.

Finally, **QAT requires a state agency to provide within 10 business days, any verification and validation report, or quality assurance report required to be produced for a major information resources project pursuant to a federal or state statute, rule, policy and or procedure.** Other verification and validation reports or quality assurance reports must be provided to QAT upon request (Eighty-seventh Legislature, GAA, 2022– 23 Biennium, Article IX, Section 9.01(c)).

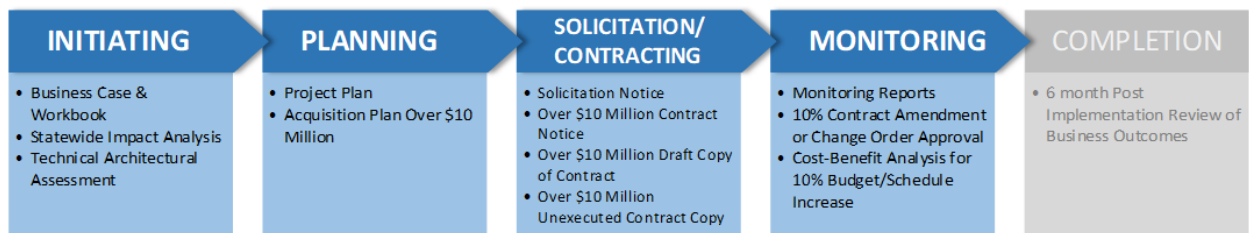


Figure 6 - Monitoring Phase

## Additional Oversight for Agencies Assigned Additional Monitoring

A major information resources project includes any information resources technology project of a state agency or institution of higher education designated for additional monitoring pursuant to the Texas Government Code, Section 2261.258(a)(1), if the development costs for the project exceed \$5.0 million (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.003(10)(C)).

DIR is authorized to provide additional oversight services, including risk management, quality assurance services, independent project monitoring, and project management, for major information resources projects described by Section 2054.003(10)(C) and for other major information resources projects selected for oversight by the governor, lieutenant governor, or speaker of the house of representatives. Details on Additional Oversight requirements are available on the [DIR website](#). Below is an overview of the process for Additional Oversight services for agencies or institutions of higher education designated for Additional Monitoring by the SAO.



Figure 7 - QAT and DIR Additional Monitoring Determination Process

## Determination Process

The QAT has defined the following project performance indicators, to be submitted with the project's approved monitoring report:

<b>Cost</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost is calculated using the Earned Value calculation Cost Performance Index (CPI)</li> <li>• <math>CPI = (Earned\ Value) / (Actual\ Cost)</math></li> </ul>
<b>Schedule</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schedule is calculated using the Earned Value calculation Schedule Performance Index (SPI)</li> <li>• <math>SPI = (Earned\ Value) / (Planned\ Value)</math></li> </ul>
<b>Scope</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measures the cost impact of scope-related change requests.</li> </ul>
<b>Quality</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Derived primarily from product quality measures reported throughout project lifecycle from the approved Quality Register.</li> </ul>

Figure 8 - QAT Performance Metrics

QAT evaluates, based on any project within the "Additional Monitoring Warranted" agency, with the following criteria met:

<b>Additional Monitoring Level</b>	<b>Approach 1</b> Using Performance Indicators Only (Schedule, Cost, Scope, Quality)	<b>Approach 2</b> Percent over budget/behind schedule
High	At least 1 red and 1 yellow for 2 consecutive reporting periods	50% over
Medium	2 yellow indicators for 2 consecutive reporting periods	10% over
Low	Up to 1 yellow in any reporting period	0-9% over

Figure 9 - Additional Monitoring Evaluation Criteria

Project evaluations consider all factors to determine true risk.



## Approach to Additional Oversight

	Risk Management	QA Services	Independent Project Monitoring	Project Management
<b>High</b>	-Executive Steering Committee -Agency adopts/procures/implements/Enterprise Risk Management Tools	-Hire QA vendor and/or independent code testing	-Hire IV&V -Executive Steering Committee	-Hire additional PM -Cost Benefit Analysis → cancel project consideration
<b>Medium</b>	-Load individual risks into SPAR QAT review of risks/agency walkthrough monthly/quarterly	-Regular updates to Quality register or QASP -Agency follow up every reporting with QAT	Regular meeting with project management team -survey of team members -At QAT discretion IV&V	Additional details for monthly monitoring report.
<b>Low</b>	-Monthly Monitoring Report	QASP or Additional items in Quality Register	Monthly Monitoring Report	Monthly Monitoring Report

Figure 10 - QAT Additional Oversight Approach

QAT will notify an agency of its additional oversight status through email. All new projects (not currently in flight) start at the low level of additional monitoring. If an agency is removed from the SAO additional monitoring list, and the agency is currently in the low level of additional monitoring, the project can return to quarterly monitoring as directed by QAT.

Projects assigned medium additional monitoring will be at that level for at least a one-year period and have the opportunity to request moving to a low level if project conditions warrant after the year of medium level additional monitoring.

Projects assigned high additional monitoring must maintain any procured services (for example, independent verification and validation (IV&V), quality assurance, additional project management) for the duration of the project.

If, under the additional monitoring report, a state agency is assigned a status of additional monitoring or reduced monitoring, then the state agency shall follow the applicable guidelines described below. The State Auditor's Office determines the contract period during which additional or reduced monitoring will occur.

### SAO Project Reviews

SAO, at the request of QAT, may conduct non-audit service projects of state agency major information resources projects. A project is initiated by QAT when project performance, project completion, or other issues are identified during monitoring. The SAO will notify an agency that one of its projects is selected by scheduling a meeting and providing the agency with a copy of the meeting agenda.

SAO and the agency will make a list of the individuals whose attendance will be required at the meeting. Attendees may include agency and contractor project personnel, subject matter experts, project sponsors, executive leadership, and other stakeholders.

After a project is complete, the SAO documents the project results and findings in a published report. QAT may choose to take action based on these results and findings.

## Chapter 6: Closure and Verification of Major Information Resources Projects

### Post-Implementation Review of Business Outcomes (PIRBO)

After completion of a major information resources project, **a state agency is required to prepare a post-implementation evaluation report** to determine whether the project met its planned objectives or other expectations. The agency is required to provide the evaluation report to QAT (as well as the agency's executive director) (Texas Government Code, Sections 2054.306 and 2054.1182).

A state agency is required to use the [Post-Implementation Review of Business Outcomes Template](#), provided by DIR, to comply with the above requirements. The Post-Implementation Review of Business Outcomes Template requires state agencies to compare the results of a project with the agency's stated project goals and objectives. A state agency is required to submit the Post-Implementation Review of Business Outcomes to QAT within six months of project closure.

### QAT Project Verification

After implementation of a major information resources project, QAT conducts project verification, which consists of validation of closure and review of post-project results. QAT validates project closure based on analysis of various sources of information, with a specific focus on the project life cycle described in the submitted Project Plan. QAT is authorized to request a state agency to provide proof of closure. For example, QAT is authorized to require a project demonstration to determine whether the project is functioning as intended after a major information resources project has been completed (Eighty-seventh Legislature, GAA, 2022–23 Biennium, Article IX, Section 9.02(i)). QAT determines the validity of the agency's interpretation of full project closure based on information provided.

### QAT Project Closure Process

After project verification is complete, QAT reviews project results including the Post-Implementation Review of Business Outcomes. Finally, QAT removes the project from the state's major information resources projects active portfolio and reports the outcomes in the QAT Annual Report.

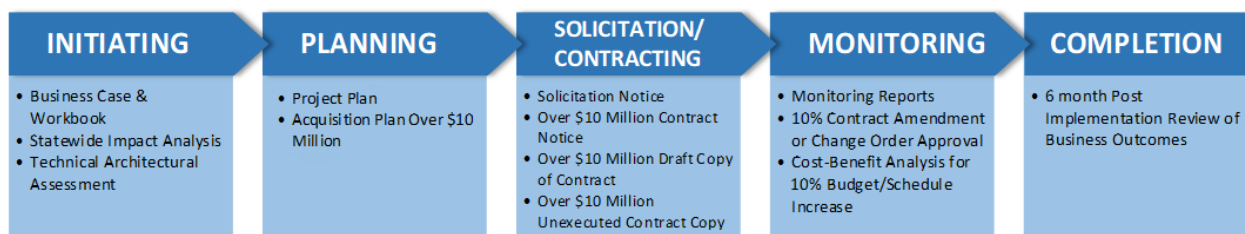


Figure 11 - Closing Phase

## Chapter 7: Reporting QAT Findings and Making Legislative Recommendations

### QAT Reporting Requirements

QAT is required to report at least annually on the state's major information resources project portfolio. Specifically, by December 1st of each year, QAT is required to report on the status of major information resources projects to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the House of Representatives, presiding officer of the committee in the House of Representatives with primary responsibility for appropriations, and presiding officer of the committee in the Senate with primary responsibility for appropriations (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.1183(a)).

The annual report is required to include:

- The current status of each major information resources project; and
- Information regarding statutorily developed performance indicators for each major information resources project at each stage of the project's life cycle (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.1183(b))
- Summary of issues (even year)
- Appendix of any justification for contract reviews (even year) (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.158(b)(5))
- Status of "additional monitoring" services provided over the past year.

### QAT Annual Report

The QAT Annual Report summarizes trends based on issues identified with the state's project portfolio and includes the status of projects, including QAT assignment of risk status, estimated project costs, project cost to date, and other information. After submitting the report to state leadership, QAT posts the report on the QAT website (link to [QAT website](#)).

### Agency Reports

Additionally, a state agency, not later than March 31 of each even-numbered year, is required to complete a review of the operational aspects of the agency's information resources deployment following instructions developed by DIR (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.0965(a)). A state agency is required to send its information resources deployment review to QAT for analysis (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.097(a)). If DIR determines that an agency's deployment decision is not in compliance with the State Strategic Plan, a state statute, or DIR rules or standards, DIR will require the agency to develop a corrective action plan that specifies how deficiencies will be corrected. DIR reports the status of corrective action plans to the SAO and the Legislative Budget Board. Members of QAT are authorized to report to the governor and the presiding officer of each house of the Legislature that an agency's deployment decision is not in compliance with the State Strategic Plan, a state statute, or DIR rules or standards (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.097(b)).

## **QAT Legislative Recommendations**

Finally, QAT is required to develop and recommend policies and procedures to improve state agency information resources technology projects and procedures to improve the implementation of state agency information resources technology projects by including considerations for best value and return on investment (Texas Government Code, Sections 2054.158(b)(1) and 2054.158(b)(2)). QAT identifies and communicates general recommendations related to major information resources projects directly to the Legislature. While agencies retain ultimate responsibility for project management and success, QAT may provide recommendations to enhance an agency's ability to satisfy commitments made to state leadership. For example, QAT may recommend that the Legislature review initial project commitments and provide feedback to the agency, thereby establishing clearer project goals and expectations.

## Chapter 8: Other QAT Actions

### Training

In addition to the actions previously mentioned, state law requires QAT to provide annual training for state agency procurement and contract management staff on best practices and methodologies for information technology contracts (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.158(b)(3)).

### Authorization to Require

State law authorizes QAT to perform several other actions. These actions fall into three categories:

- Requiring assistance from other agencies;
- Requiring certain information to be provided by state agencies; and
- Taking remedial action.

QAT is authorized to require assistance from other agencies. First, on request by QAT, the SAO shall review major information resources projects and the information provided by state agencies (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.1181(h); Eighty-seventh Legislature, GAA, 2022–23 Biennium, Article IX, Section 9.02(d)).

Second, on request by QAT, the CPA is required to provide assistance:

- Verifying the accuracy of information provided by state agencies on project costs; and
- Determining a state agency's compliance with certain requirements (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.1181(i); Eighty-seventh Legislature, GAA, 2022–23 Biennium, Article IX, Section 9.02(c)).

QAT is also authorized to require certain information to be provided by state agencies, including the following for any major information resources project:

- The status;
- The costs;
- The associated risk; and
- The project's general potential for success (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.1181(g)).

Additionally, QAT is authorized to assign independent verification and validation services for any project, should conditions warrant additional monitoring.

Moreover, QAT is authorized to require independent project monitoring, project status reporting, project expenditure reporting, or any additional information necessary to assess a project's ongoing potential for success (Eighty-seventh Legislature, GAA, 2022–23 Biennium, Article IX, Section 9.02(c)(1)).

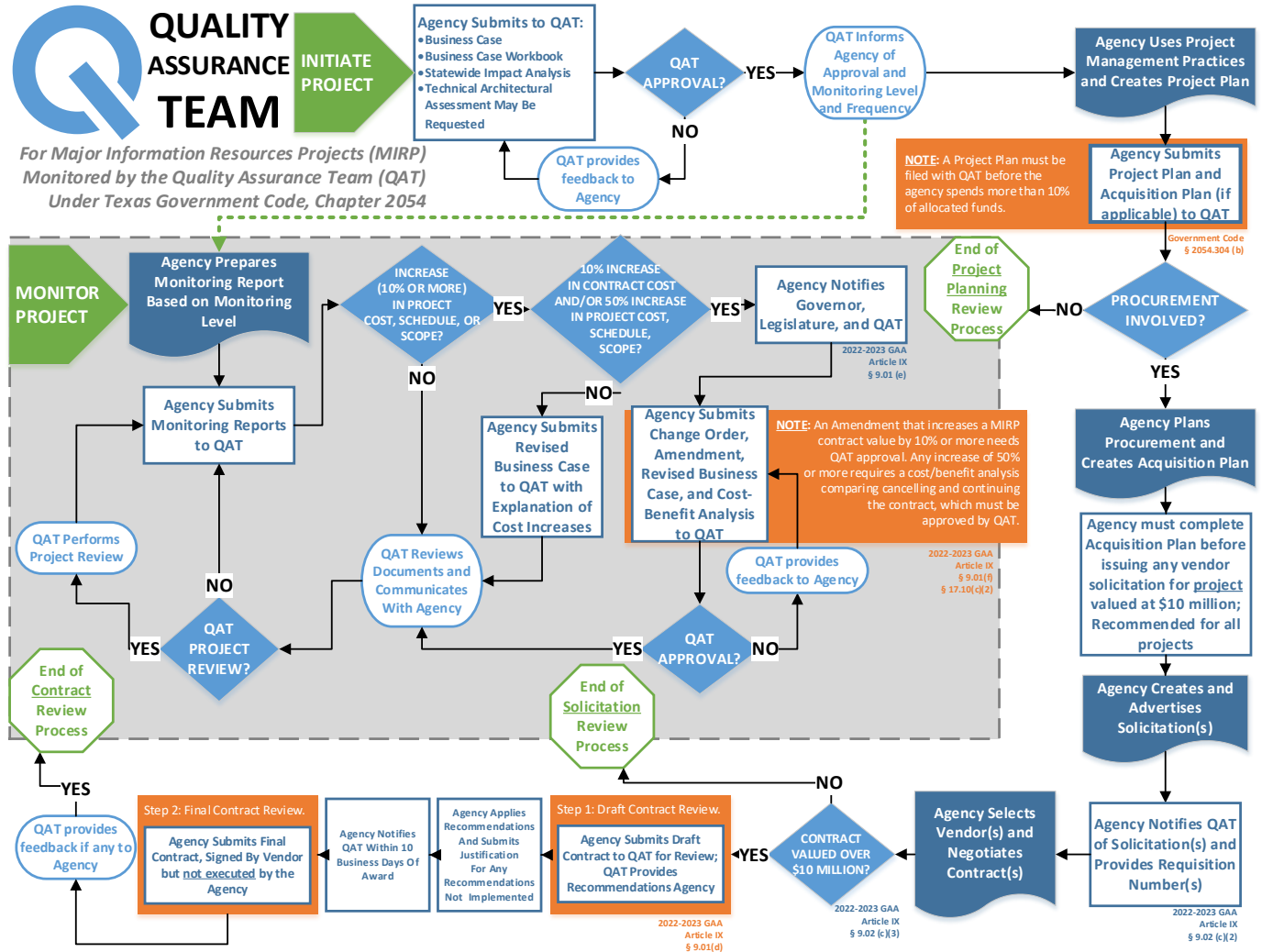
QAT is also authorized, without regard to the source of funds associated with the expenditures for a major information resources project and without regard to method of finance of an appropriation associated with such a project, to request information and impose the requirements or additional actions, as provided in statutory provisions relating to the oversight of major information projects on all projects regardless of whether undertaken entirely or partially by: outsourcing or contracting of any sort, or agency employees (Eighty-seventh Legislature, GAA, 2022–23 Biennium, Article IX, Section 9.02(c)(5) and 9.02(c)(6)).

QAT is authorized to take remedial action for state agency major information resources projects. QAT, if it determines that a major information resources project is poorly managed or has excessive cost overruns, is authorized to:

- Establish a corrective action plan, including modifications to the design, deployment, or costs related to the project; or
- Discontinue the project, subject to LBB approval (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.1181(c)).

# Appendix A: QAT Process

The image below shows the QAT MIRP process flow.





# Glossary

## Acronyms

Automated Budget and Evaluation System of Texas (ABEST)

Biennial Operating Plan (BOP)

Chief Information Officer (CIO)

Contract Amendment and Change Order Approval (CACOA)

Comptroller of Public Accounts (CPA)

Department of Information Resources (DIR)

General Appropriations Act (GAA)

Institution of higher education (IHE)

Independent verification and validation (IV&V)

Quality Assurance Team (QAT)

Legislative Budget Board (LBB)

Major Information Resources Project (MIRP)

Medicaid Management Information System (MMIS)

Post-Implementation Review of Business Outcomes (PIRBO)

Statewide Project Automated Reporting (SPAR)

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

State Auditor's Office (SAO)

Texas Administrative Code (TAC)

Texas Government Code (TGC)

Texas Medicaid and Healthcare Partnership (TMHP)

## Definitions

**Additional oversight:** DIR is authorized to provide [additional oversight services](#), including risk management, quality assurance services, independent project monitoring, and project management, for major information resources projects described by Texas Government Code,

Section 2054.003(10)(c), and for other major information resources projects selected for oversight by the governor, lieutenant governor, or speaker of the house of representatives.

**Acquisition Plan:** The Acquisition Plan helps QAT understand how a particular state agency will define the parties' roles, measure vendor performance, and control changes to a project's scope during the acquisition of technology related goods and/or services from vendors (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.305). A state agency may use DIR's Statewide Project Delivery Framework [Acquisition Plan Template](#) to comply with the requirement. If the major information resources project involves a procurement subject to QAT review, an Acquisition Plan must be kept in the procurement file. Once an Acquisition Plan is filed with QAT, an agency may proceed with forming solicitations. Agencies assigned a rating of "additional monitoring warranted" under Texas Government Code, Section 2261.258(a)(1), are required to provide an Acquisition Plan for all MIRPs (Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 216).

**Application Development:** Typically refers to the primary implementation of *new* applications, or enhancement efforts for existing applications with a level of effort at 80 hours or more. Software as a Service Solutions (SaaS) and Commercial Off the Shelf Solutions (COTS) may be considered development projects if they include customizations as part of implementation. Data Migration and Legacy System replacements or enhancements may also be considered application development.

**Application Enhancement:** Refers to adding *new features/functionality* to an already completed project. For example, if an agency decides after initial implementation it would like to add additional features or functionality that were not previously expected or scoped, that addition is defined as an enhancement. If the enhancement involves more than 80 hours to complete, the enhancement is defined as a development project and must be reported as such.

**Application Maintenance:** Refers to ongoing administration of accepted and "completed" functionalities/features. For instance, you may have a maintenance contract to: provide ongoing support to end users, fix previously unknown bugs in the accepted functionality, and ensure that the server does not go down, and a very minor, low level of effort (under 80 hours of work) for each enhancement to the already live system. Any activities outside of this definition would be considered development and be required to follow state reporting requirements as defined in GAA Article IX, TGC 2054, and TAC 216.

**Biennial Operating Plan:** A tool that agencies use to plan for the appropriate use of information resources to support their mission, goals, objectives, and strategies. The BOP implements the agency's Strategic Plan and aligns with the State Strategic Plan for Information Resources. It demonstrates how the agency intends to accomplish its strategic objectives using information technology in alignment with the agency's budget. Agencies enter their BOP information into the LBB's [ABEST website](#).

**Business Case:** This document ([link to DIR template](#)) is a narrative comparison of the business problem, solution costs, and expected project benefits/outcomes based on a business case

analysis process. As a result of the 87th Legislature, Texas Government Code, Section 2054.003(2-a), defines “Business Case” as a comparison of business solution costs and project benefits based on a solution assessment.

**Business Case Workbook:** This document ([link to DIR template](#)) provides the quantified estimates of all project costs, both capital and non-capital, project benefits, and returns on investment. QAT requires agencies/IHEs to report all capital and non-capital costs associated with a major information resources project in the Business Case Workbook, entering costs as required in each field. All costs relating to a major information resource project, including costs for vendor services, agency personnel services, and agency personnel fringe benefits are required to be reported to QAT as part of project monitoring.

**Charter:** A document defining roles and responsibilities for an organizational unit or program area.

**Contract:** A contract, grant, or agreement, including a revenue generating contract, an interagency or interlocal grant or agreement, purchase order or other written expression of terms of agreement or an amendment, modification, renewal, or extension of such for the purchase or sale of goods or services that was entered into or paid for, either in whole or in part, by a state agency or institution of higher education (2022-2023 GAA, 87th Legislature, Article IX, Section 7.04, and Texas Government Code, Chapter 2054).

**Major information resources project:** Any information resources technology project identified in a state agency’s Biennial Operation Plan (BOP) with development costs that exceed \$5.0 million and that: requires one year or longer to reach operations status; involves more than one state agency; or substantially alters work methods of state agency personnel or the delivery of services to clients. The term also includes any information resources technology project designated by the Legislature in the General Appropriations Act as a major information resources project and any information resources technology project of a state agency designated for additional monitoring under Texas Government Code, [Section 2261.258\(a\)\(1\)](#), if the development costs for the project exceed \$5 million (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.003(10)).

**Monitoring Report:** Once a project is initiated and reviewed by QAT, project performance is monitored using the DIR Monitoring Report Template for the project duration. Performance is based on the following: Overall project status; performance indicators, including schedule, cost, scope, and quality; risks/issues/changes; and project start and end dates and costs. QAT determines the monitoring schedule. All agencies must provide their monitoring reports both in PDF format using the required [Monitoring Report Template](#), as well as manually entering the required project information into SPAR.

**Project:** An initiative that provides information resources technologies and creates products, services, or results within or among elements of a state agency; and is characterized by well-defined parameters, specific objectives, common benefits, planned activities, a scheduled

completion date, and an established budget with a specified source of funding (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.003, and Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 216).

**Project Plan:** This [template](#) builds on the general planning information contained in the Business Case, including more detail and specifics on monitoring and control methods, quality, communication, configuration, performance, and risk management. It documents overall governance and provides a planning blueprint for both project management and technology-related activities and deliverables. Additionally, the Project Plan demonstrates how the agency considered incorporating into the project the applicable best practices recommended in the QAT Annual Report (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.304(d)). The Project Plan should be updated and submitted to QAT throughout the duration of the project as needed.

**QAT:** An interagency workgroup established to provide ongoing oversight of “major information resources projects” as defined in Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 2054, for all state agencies, including Institutes of Higher Education that are assigned additional monitoring under Texas Government Code, Section 2261.258(a)(1). QAT members include the Comptroller of Public Accounts (CPA), the Department of Information Resources (DIR), and the Legislative Budget Board (LBB). The State Auditor’s Office (SAO) serves in an advisory role to QAT.

**Statewide Project Automated Reporting (SPAR) system:** DIR system ([link](#)) used to track and review projects. Agencies that are implementing major information resources projects enter and upload project data directly into the SPAR system for QAT’s review. Requires a license issued by DIR to access.

**State agency:** A department, commission, board, office, council, authority, or other agency in the executive or judicial branch of state government that is created by the constitution or a statute of Texas, including a university system or institution of higher education (IHE) (Texas Government Code, Section 2054.003(13)).

**Statewide Impact Analysis:** This [template](#) contains an assessment of the project’s impact on the use of information technology resources across the state.

**Technical Architecture Analysis:** This [template](#) reviews the proposed technical architecture for the project’s use of industry accepted standards. It is only required by agencies with an “additional monitoring” designation from the SAO if requested by QAT as described in Texas Government Code, Section 2261.258.

**Texas Project Delivery Framework:** A set of standardized [templates](#), maintained by DIR in collaboration with statewide agencies to enable agencies to successfully deliver MIRPS on budget and on schedule.