



RPL Service Project Guidelines

Each student in the APCO Institute Registered-Public Safety Leader (RPL) Program is required to undertake a 12-month service project in order to successfully complete the program. RPL service projects must benefit the public safety communications industry and/or APCO at either the state, regional or national level.

- **State Level:** A project that will benefit the industry within the student's own state.
 - *Example: Creating and establishing a state TERT team.*
- **Regional Level:** A project that will benefit the public safety communications industry within the agency's geographical region (must include multiple ECC locations).
 - *Example: Creating a regional quality assurance training program, delivering it across the student's region.*
- **National Level:** A project that will benefit the 9-1-1/public safety industry through national programs.
 - *Example: Developing a crisis intervention training for telecommunicators and delivering it at a national level (e.g., conferences, webinar delivery).*

Proposed RPL service projects that are agency-specific will not be accepted, with the exception of initial CALEA (Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies) accreditation and/or APCO ATPA (Agency Training Program Accreditation, formally known as P33). For both, the student must be actively involved in the accreditation process and document their work for the full year enrolled in RPL.

(Please Note: The student must remain with their agency for the duration of the RPL program in order to get credit for CALEA/ATPA accreditation. If multiple RPL students at the same agency are working towards accreditation, each must individually document and report their own work.)

- **CALEA:** At the end of the 12-month program, the student's agency must at least be at the self-assessment phase.
- **APCO ATPA:** At the end of the 12-month program, the student's agency must at least be at the status of a completed and submitted application for ATPA.

The student's Service Project proposal will be reviewed and approved as part of the RPL application process. Students will submit the following in their application:

- The geographical level which the service project benefits.
- The Service Project's category (e.g., peer to peer, CISM, other)
- Quarterly timeline for achievable goals throughout the year.
- Summary statement of the service project, including how it benefits the public safety communications industry.
- List of proposed stakeholders to be involved in the Service Project.



Students will be notified of their submission status and final approval of their proposed Service Project upon admissions approval to the RPL program.

Service Project Updates:

Students will consistently work on their Service Project for the entire RPL program. Progress will be tracked and reported via the Service Project Update forum assignments found throughout the courses.

During the RPL Service Project Updates, students will:

- Confirm that their project is on track to achieve its 12-month goal.
- Verify that proper documentation is being maintained for the project.
- Report on any substantial project developments (positive/negative).

If at any point throughout the RPL program there are issues with the Service Project, contact RPL@apcointl.org.

Tips on Getting Started on Your RPL Service Project (And How to Complete it on Time.)

You developed your RPL service project concept during the application process for the program and it has been approved by the APCO Institute. Now you must get the project underway. After you have your end goals and overall timeline projected, where do you begin and what are the next steps? Here tips to consider. Try to adapt them to your project.

1. **Break the RPL service project down into manageable parts:** Divide your project into smaller tasks and set deadlines for each part. This will help you stay on track and manage your time effectively. Consider what you need to do first and what phases of the project will come afterward. Keep your planning flexible. Nobody can see a clear path from start to finish and, at some point, you may find the need to loop back to a previous point along the way.
2. **Use your timeline:** Starting with your overall timeline, develop a schedule for your project that includes milestones, research, analysis, and writing. Your project may also involve contacting people, setting up meetings, making agreements on working together with others, all depending on the nature of your service project. Scheduling and documenting will help you stay organized and ensure you have enough time to complete each phase of the project. Consistent and steady progress is key to success. Know your deadline and gauge your progress against the time you have left to finish your project.



3. **Stay organized:** Keep all your research, notes, and project materials in one place. Use a notebook, folder, or digital platform to keep everything organized and easily accessible. Build a digital directory with folder to help organize your files from working documents, to early drafts to final versions. Also, if you are researching online, be sure to keep a record of your sources with links you can use, as needed, to refer back to previous work.
4. **Set up a space and time:** Consider having a workspace and block out specific times of day when you can put your mind to the project.
5. **Seek guidance and feedback:** Talk to your RPL facilitator or classmates, colleagues at work, or fellow APCO chapter members about your project and seek their advice and feedback. They can help guide you in the right direction and offer valuable insights. RPL grads can be helpful, too.
6. **Use a variety of resources:** Be sure to select the resources that relate to the purpose of your study. If you are writing a study, you will want to reference source documents. If you are working on setting up a project involving group activity (such as a peer-to-peer group) resources will be people, contact information, meeting agendas and notes, and ideas for group activities. Be sure your resources match the purposes of your project.
7. **Keep track of your progress:** Regularly review your progress and adjust as needed. This will help you stay focused and ensure you are on track to meet your goals. Be sure to post your update reports in each RPL course.
8. **Be open to change:** As you work on your project, be open to new ideas and perspectives. Your project may evolve as you learn more about your topic, so be willing to adapt and adjust your approach. Be careful, though, your finished project must correspond to the project APCO approved for you to do at the start of your program. If you need to make a “course correction” be sure to contact APCO staff. Save copies of all correspondence.
9. **Reflect on your learning:** At the end of your project, take time to reflect on what you have learned and how you have grown throughout the process. This will help you appreciate the value of your hard work and dedication.

10. **Prepare your submittal:** Before submitting your finished project, be sure to use the checklist provided in the RPL course to doublecheck that you have all required elements for your project, that you have assembled them according to the directions provided, and that you submit your project on time.

RPL Project Pre-Submission Checklist:

The following should be included in the student's final submission of their Service Project:

- **Cover Page** – The first page of the project should include the following:
 - Service Project Title
 - Student Name
 - Course Number
 - RPL Program Start/Finish Dates
- **Executive Summary** – A brief summary of the RPL Service Project. This should include:
 - Project's purpose and benefit(s) to the public safety communications industry
 - Project End Goal(s) and objectives to meet along the way
 - Methods and approach used to accomplish the Service Project's goals
 - The benefits and outcomes of the Service Project
 - Any future work/steps that will happen after the RPL program's completion
- **Detailed Timeline** – The timeline must be in chronological order covering the entire 12-month period of the RPL program. Documentation must show at least 15-20hrs of work on the project is accounted for each month. This can include the following examples (where applicable):
 - Project Start and End dates
 - Milestones
 - Tasks and Activities related to the Service Project. Examples include:
 - Meeting dates/times
 - Blocks of time spent working on the project (e.g., researching, developing materials)
 - Date and times of Service Project related communication (emails, phone calls, video conferences) with stakeholders and other individuals
 - Dates and details for delivery of training materials, presentations, etc.
- **Additional Documentation** – These include anything relevant to the Service Project to document progress over the course of the year, which can include (but is not limited to, if applicable):
 - **Email Correspondences** – In order of receipt (in PDF format). Please ensure that all confidential information is redacted.



- **Meeting Minutes** – Minutes should be included in order of occurrence. These should show attendees (showing the student attended), and include date/time information, and an agenda detailing what was discussed in the meeting.
- **Materials developed in relation to the project** – Handouts, videos, PowerPoint presentations.
- **Sign-in/attendance sheets** from conducted training/presentations.
- **Research notes and resources** cited.
- **APCO ATPA** – For Service Projects for ATPA accreditation, include the receipt and approval email from APCO regarding the application.
- **CALEA** – For Service Projects for CALEA accreditation, include proof of application in Pending/Review status.

RPL Project Submission

- The service project will be submitted via e-mail to RPL@apcointl.org.
- All documents must be submitted in PDF format where possible.
- Service projects must be turned in during the designated week of RPL Course 6.

Final Review:

- Students will be notified when their project has been received by the APCO Institute for review.
 - Students will be asked to verify their address to be sent their certificate upon successful completion of the RPL program.
- Service projects will be individually reviewed within 3 to 4 weeks of submission.
 - If the APCO Institute reaches out for more information regarding the submission, the student must respond by the given deadline.
- At the review process's end, students will receive an email notification of the final status of their Service Project and the RPL program.