

## Minimum Requirements for a CMMI Benchmark Appraisal Observation

### Notice

The CMMI Method Definition Document (MDD) is the authoritative source for all appraisal requirements and must be used, followed, and adhered to for all registered appraisals.

### Applicability

All candidate CMMI Institute Certified Lead Appraisers are subject to the requirements of this policy, and CMMI Institute License Partners are responsible for verifying that the status and certifications of each Lead Appraiser sponsored under their agreement meet all CMMI Method Definition Document (MDD) and policy requirements. This includes verifying that the candidate meets and satisfies all observation requirements. This policy applies to any CMMI appraisal regardless of versioning (e.g., V1.3, V2.0).

### Background

As the final step in the Lead Appraiser certification process, an observation is intended to provide a uniform level of mentoring and observation for candidate CMMI Institute Certified Lead Appraisers. The goal of this mentoring is to ensure a smooth transition to the role of Appraisal Team Lead. The scope of a Benchmark Appraisal could (in principle) range from a single Practice Area examined for a single project, to a Maturity Level 5 scope covering a multi-site organization with numerous projects. An observation appraisal cannot exceed Maturity Level 3; however, it should still reflect a scope robust enough to allow the observer to determine if the candidate possesses the knowledge and skills to effectively perform as a Lead Appraiser. Because an overly narrow scope might limit the opportunity for mentoring, and an overly ambitious scope might create challenges that overwhelm the mentoring process, a middle ground is recommended. The policies established by CMMI Institute regarding observation appraisals are designed to facilitate a valid, useful appraisal and to provide opportunities for mentorship.

### Implementation Detail

The following criteria will be evaluated by the observer assigned to each candidate Lead Appraiser during the process of planning the observation appraisal. The criteria are intended as guidelines (to be interpreted, with good judgment, by a CMMI Institute authorized and trained observer) to address the needs of an individual candidate Lead Appraiser, working in an organizational setting where the observed appraisal is to occur. Process context details—such as organization size, the size and duration of typical

projects, lifecycles in use, and business practices of the appraised organization—could potentially lead to trade-offs among the criteria numbered below.

CMMI Institute may cancel a scheduled observation if any one of the items listed in this document is not accomplished.

1. **Certification Exam:** After completion of the CMMI Lead Appraiser Training course, candidates must successfully complete the Lead Appraiser qualification exam. (For more information about the exam, please contact [info@cmmiinstitute.com](mailto:info@cmmiinstitute.com).)
2. **Observation Appraisal:**
  - I. Must be a Benchmark or SCAMPI A Appraisal, based on CMMI.
  - II. Action Plan Reappraisals may not be used for observations under any circumstance.
  - III. Must appraise no more than one CMMI View.
  - IV. Must be set up in the CMMI Institute Appraisal System a minimum of 30 days prior to the Phase II (on-site period). All data minus the ratings must be provided.
  - V. Must include a minimum of five (5) days for the on-site period.
  - VI. Must include all practice areas at Maturity Level 2.
    - i. SAM may be excluded only if there is valid rationale for the exclusion.
    - ii. All goals must be rated. If a Maturity Level is not generated, a Capability Profile must be created showing the goal ratings.
  - VII. May not include Practice Group Levels 4&5.
  - VIII. Must submit the drafted appraisal plan to the observer 30 days prior to the on-site period.
  - IX. Appraisal Sponsor must complete and submit a Sponsor Role and Responsibilities Acceptance Form and an appraisal feedback form.
  - X. Must be submitted to CMMI Institute within 30 days after the appraisal delivery.
  - XI. Must meet all other MDD and policy requirements for conducting a Benchmark or SCAMPI A Appraisal
3. **Organizational Scope:**
  - I. At least 2 projects or instantiations.
  - II. Scope large enough to require at least 12 interviewees.

4. **Appraisal Team Composition:** The observer assigned to the observation must be listed in the appraisal plan and the appraisal system record; however, they may not be considered a member of the team.
5. **Interpreters:** If an interpreter is required, the candidate's organization is responsible for obtaining, and providing payment of, a CMMI Institute-approved Registered Interpreter.
6. **Appraisal Sponsor:** Should not be in the management reporting chain of the candidate Lead Appraiser.
7. **Candidate Lead Appraiser:** Should not have significant conflicts of interest relating to the appraisal.
8. **Security:** If your appraisal will be delivered at a sensitive compartmented information facility, the candidate is responsible for obtaining the appropriate entry documents for the observer.
9. **Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDA):** Observers may request to see organizational documents to assess a candidate's interpretation of a practice area. If the appraised organization requires an NDA, it is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that the required documents are processed a minimum of 14 days prior to the appraisal on-site.
10. **Certification Validity Period:** To complete the certification process, candidates must:
  - I. Submit the appraisal for review; it must be accepted/closed by CMMI Institute.
  - II. Ensure the licensed CMMI Partner pays all observation fees.
  - III. Complete any remediation activities and submit them to the observer for review.
  - IV. Review the final observation report.

The certification validity period of three years will begin when items I – IV above are completed.

11. **Policies and Guidelines:** Certification as a CMMI Lead Appraiser requires compliance with CMMI Institute's formal policies regarding appraisals. These policies can be found on the [Quality Policy Pages](#). Lead Appraisers are also expected to comply with the Code of Professional Conduct (COPC), the Partner Guide, and the Certification Agreement. These items must be understood and adhered to by Lead Appraisers throughout the life of their certifications.

12. **Certification Renewal:** Certification as a CMMI Institute Certified Lead Appraiser includes a commitment to ongoing professional development to maintain a high level of proficiency in the practice. Please review the [renewal requirements for CMMI Institute Certified Lead Appraisers](#) for reference and guidance regarding the activities required to maintain the certification.

To schedule an observation complete the observation request form available at <https://cmmiinstitute.com/resource-files/public/pcs/general/observation-request-form> or contact [partner@cmmiinstitute.com](mailto:partner@cmmiinstitute.com).

Questions regarding this policy can be sent to [quality@cmmiinstitute.com](mailto:quality@cmmiinstitute.com).