



Q&A: 2012 Changes to Baldrige Award Eligibility

December 16, 2012

How is eligibility to apply for the national Baldrige Award changing in 2012?

Here's the main change: organizations that have received the top-tier award from an [Alliance for Performance Excellence](#) member program (generally, a state or local Baldrige-based award program) are eligible to apply for the national Baldrige Award.

Besides getting the top-tier award from one of those programs, is there any other way for my organization to be eligible to apply for the national Baldrige Award?

For your organization to be eligible, one of the following conditions must be true (see also the [Baldrige Award Application Forms](#)):

- In the past 5 years (i.e., 2007–2011), your organization has received the top award from a program that is a member of the [Alliance for Performance Excellence](#) (generally, a state or local Baldrige-based award program).
- In the past 5 years (i.e., 2007–2011), your organization has applied for the national Baldrige Award, and the total of the process and results scoring band numbers assigned was 8 or higher.
- In the past 5 years (i.e., 2007–2011), your organization has applied for the national Baldrige Award and received a site visit.
- More than 25% of your organization's workforce is located outside the organization's home state.
- There is no [Alliance for Performance Excellence](#) award program available for your organization.

Why were these changes made?

Eligibility conditions have changed to leverage the larger Baldrige enterprise—in particular, the state and local Baldrige-based award programs. We're confident that these changes will help ensure a healthy, effective Baldrige enterprise long into the future as the Baldrige Program develops a business model that relies on nonappropriated funds to operate.

The change focuses organizations on getting early reviews from the network of Baldrige-based award programs throughout the United States. And, in fact, this simply formalizes the de facto feeder system for the Baldrige Award: the vast majority of national Baldrige Award winners first received their top-tier state-level award.

What are my options if my organization isn't eligible to apply for the national Baldrige Award?

You have a couple of options:

- **If you want to apply for a Baldrige-based award**, you can apply to an [Alliance](#) program (generally, your state or local award program). As soon as you receive the top-tier award from that program, you'll be eligible to apply for the national Baldrige Award.
- **If you'd like to receive a Baldrige-based assessment** from the national Baldrige Program in 2012, you may be interested in an alternative assessment that's now under development. It will include Baldrige-based feedback, but you won't be eligible for the Baldrige Award, and the results won't affect your organization's future eligibility to apply for the award one way or the other. If this option interests you, we'd like to involve you in its design so we can ensure that it meets your needs. Just let [Jackie DesChamps](#) (301-975-3771) know.

I'm not interested in applying to my state or local program. That's why I applied at the national level. Is there any option besides going through my state award program?

If you want to apply for the national Baldrige Award, your organization needs to meet one of the conditions above. But if your focus is on receiving a Baldrige-based assessment from the national Baldrige Program in 2012, consider the feedback-only assessment that's now under development. It will include Baldrige-based feedback, but you won't be eligible for the Baldrige Award, and the results won't affect your organization's future eligibility to apply for the award one way or the other. We are looking for organizations to participate in this design. If your organization is interested in this option, let [Jackie DesChamps](#) (301-975-3771) know.

Your records are incorrect. We did receive the top-tier award from our state (or local) quality award program. How can we correct this?

Then you're definitely eligible to apply in 2012. We apologize for this error in our database. Please contact [Jackie DesChamps](#) (301-975-3771), and we'll make the correction.

We're now competing for the state award and expect to receive the top-tier award early next year. If we receive the award before your eligibility deadline, can we apply at the national level in 2012?

Yes. As long as you receive the top-tier award by the eligibility deadline of April 3, 2012, you're eligible to apply for the national award. If you receive the award after that date, you'll be eligible in 2013.