**Issue Management Process Workflow:**

An issue is any roadblock or unintended impact that directly affects the [project’s timeline](https://www.projectmanager.com/guides/project-timeline) and/or performance. It’s different than a risk, which can be defined as a potential problem or future issue that might happen in your project. An issue is something that has already come up in the project, and we need to identify and track that issue immediately.

Step 1: Identify and Assess Issues

* Identify and Submit a Proposed Issue:

-When an issue is identified, the issue reporter should enter the issue in the project’s issue log and set status to “In Review”. As shown in the excel file [Issue Log.xlsx](Issue%20Log.xlsx).

-For critical issues the reporter determines require expedited processing, the issue should be escalated to the attention of the project manager.

-Critical issues typically meet one or more of the following criteria:

* The severity of the issue will significantly impact project quality, cost, schedule, or resources.
* The issue includes a project work stoppage.
* The issue cannot wait for disposition due to client concerns.
* Identify and Assign the Assignee:

-The Project Manager is responsible for assessing new issues to identify items that may affect multiple project areas and recommend escalation for these items.

-Based on this assessment, the Project Manager should determine the issue assignee for the proposed issue based on the team or manager who holds the most responsibility and authority over the resolution of the issue.

-The issue reporter should be included in the review to facilitate clear communication of the details of the issue and provide background as required.

* Assess the Issue:

-When a new issue is identified, the issue reporter works with the Project Manager to determine if the issue is valid and within the project’s domain of control.

-If the initial assessment reveals the issue should belong to a different team or project, the Project Manager routes the issue to the appropriate agency for consideration. This routing should be in the form of an email and/or other documented written notice that a possible issue to their operations has been identified and is being routed for their assessment.

-If the Project Manager finds the issue is a duplicate or is a risk or an action item, he should notify the issue reporter, and close the issue in the issue log. An entry noting the reason for closure should be entered in the log.

-The Project Manager works with the issue assignee and issue reporter to assess the impact of each issue on the project. Analysis includes an assessment of the:

* + Consequences of delaying resolution of the issue.
  + Impact to quality, project cost, technical success, and schedule .
  + Dependencies the issue may have to other issues, risks timelines, or events.
  + Discovery of other issues or risks that were unseen.

-The result of the assessment must include a concise statement that identifies the decision or action needed, the due date by which the decision or action is needed, and the impact if the decision or action is not completed by the due date. The due date should be determined in relation to tasks or milestone dates in the schedule that are affected by the decision/action requested.

Step 2: Clarify Issue, Create a Resolution Plan, Review, and Verify the Issue

After the initial assessment the issue assignee clarifies the issue and updates the issue log accordingly. The issue then proceeds into the review and verification process.

* Clarify:

-Upon completion of the initial issue assessment, the issue assignee is responsible for revising the issue to validate the following information in the issue log is correctly updated:

* The description contains enough background or supplemental information to understand the issue
* The action/resolution being requested is clearly outlined
* The impact is assessed

-Once the issue assignee, issue reporter, and Project Manager are mutually satisfied with the description of the issue and the proposed action or resolution, the issue status is updated to “In Progress”.

* Review:

-An issue that is in progress is prioritized based on the impact the issue presents to the project.

-Review priority is given to high severity and escalated issues. Medium and low severity issues are reviewed after the priority issues have been examined and as time permits. Issue reviews are scheduled weekly.

* Resolution Plan:

-The issue assignee is responsible for drafting the Resolution Plan steps necessary to drive the issue to closure in the issue log. Once this is completed, the Resolution Plan is reviewed by the project manager and updated as required.

-Resolution Plan steps are constructed to use the “what/who/when” construct: they identify the action, the person assigned to perform the action, and the action due date.

-It is the responsibility of the issue assignee to collaborate with the issue reporter and Project Manager to validate the Resolution Plan fully addresses the issue and effectively leads to closure.

Step 3: Implement Continuous Issue Response Monitoring and Control

-The Project Manager is responsible for verifying issue resolution steps are performed by the due dates assigned and the identified resolution steps result in a resolution to the issue. If additional resolution steps need to be added, changed, or deleted, the issue reporter should be notified and provide approval prior to the issue being modified.

* Monitor & Manage Issues to Resolution

-The issue assignee is primarily responsible for verifying the escalation occurs: if the issue resolution steps are not achieving the necessary progress or if critical path tasks or key deliverables are being adversely affected.

-If the modification of the resolution steps affect the overall due date of the issue, the issue must be reviewed for approval to extend the overall due date of the issue. Before approval can be given, the assignee must include the reason or need to extend the due date of the issue.

* Escalation

-If the issue assignee, Project Manager, or issue reporter determines the issue requires escalation, the issue should be escalated in accordance with the Communication Plan.

* Criteria for Close

-Issues can be closed when the steps in the Resolution Plan are complete and the assignee, reporter, and Project Manager agree the issue no longer exists. The issue assignee may recommend closure based on the following criteria:

* Resolution Plan steps are complete and the issue no longer exists
* Resolution of the issue occurs through the resolution of another issue
* The issue is transferred out of the project

-To initiate the closure process, the assignee updates the issue log with the details of the final resolution of the issue. The assignee then forwards the issue resolution update to the reporter to confirm agreement the issue is resolved and can be closed. If the issue reporter disagrees, a response is routed back to the issue assignee for additional actions required to complete the issue resolution.

Step 4: Confirm and Close the Issue

-As notified by the issue assignee, or Project Manager, the issue reporter reviews a resolved issue and verifies it can be closed. Once agreement is reached on closure between all issue stakeholders, the issue is added to the agenda for the next project status review to approve close.

-Once approval is given, the Project Manager sets the issue status to “Resolved;” enters a “Closed Date” in the issue log; updates the resolution description to record how the issue was resolved; and notifies the issue assignee, and issue reporter of the action. At the close of the project, all outstanding issues and issue resolutions are compiled for review during the project lessons learned sessions for record.