



USPAP Q&A

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This communication by the Appraisal Standards Board (ASB) does not establish new standards or interpret existing standards. The ASB USPAP Q&A is issued to inform appraisers, regulators, and users of appraisal services of the ASB responses to questions raised by regulators and individuals; to illustrate the applicability of the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP) in specific situations; and to offer advice from the ASB for the resolution of appraisal issues and problems.

Confidentiality and Intended Users

Question:

I recently performed an appraisal. Yesterday, an intended user who is not the client contacted me to discuss the appraisal. Do I need the client's authorization to discuss the appraisal with this intended user?

Response:

Yes. Although intended users have an important role in the appraiser's decisions about the appropriate scope of work and the content of the report, the appraiser cannot discuss the appraisal with an intended user without the client's authorization. The Confidentiality section of the ETHICS RULE states:

An appraiser must not disclose confidential information or assignment results prepared for a client to anyone other than the client and persons specifically authorized by the client...

The appraiser-client relationship is distinct from the appraiser's relationship to intended users.

Significant Appraisal Assistance

Question:

In preparing an appraisal assignment, I talk with many different people. I know the report certification must identify individuals who provide "significant real property appraisal assistance." What is significant appraisal assistance?

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Response:

USPAP does not include a definition of significant appraisal assistance. However, aspects of this phrase can be explored to clarify its meaning.

First, the term “significant” means that the contribution must be of substance to the development of the assignment results. In other words, the individual must contribute to the valuation analysis in a noteworthy way. An individual who merely collects or provides data for use in the analysis does not provide significant appraisal assistance.

Secondly, the reference to “appraisal assistance” means that the contribution is related to the appraisal process or requires appraiser competency. One misconception is that non-appraisers who provide assistance should be identified in the certification. This is incorrect because the certification requirements in USPAP apply only to appraisers. Thus, only appraisers sign the certification or are identified as providing significant appraisal assistance. For example, the use of an environmental expert to determine wetland boundaries would not be considered significant real property appraisal assistance.

Examples of contributions made by appraisers that constitute significant real property appraisal assistance include the identification of comparable properties and data, inspection of the subject property and comparables, estimating accrued depreciation, or forecasting income and expenses.

Each year the ASB compiles the monthly USPAP Q&A into a publication entitled Frequently Asked Questions, or FAQ's. In addition to compiling the new FAQ's for the year, all of the FAQ's in the publication are reviewed and updated, if necessary, to ensure they represent the most recent guidance from the Board. Frequently Asked Questions is published as an adjunct to each edition of USPAP, and has become a valuable reference for appraisers, users of appraisal services, and regulators. The Frequently Asked Questions publication can be purchased for \$20.00 by visiting the “Foundation Store” page on The Appraisal Foundation website (<https://commerce.appraisalfoundation.org>).

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