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[Captioner is ready and standing by] [Caption ore is ready and standing by]

We're waiting for Quinn to log in and get connected to the meeting and then I think we're waiting for the captioning folks.

Okay.

Hold on a second.

Quinn Montgomery.

Has joined the conference.

I'm still having technical difficulties. I'm still trying to work it out.

Gwen, why don't you come over to my desk.

I'm trying to remember where you are.

I am on the second floor. You know where the training center is, right.

Yes.

Meet me there. He'll walk you back.

All right.

Gwen Montgomery has left the conference. [Captioner is ready and standing by]

Can you hear us?

Yes.

Recording to the service and record. I stopped it. We don't want to save it because it's not ready. Hit okay.

Okay.

Delete it. Once you get comfortable and happy with the one you have, then save it. Let me close out of here.

I will leave this -- when it says save, I will leave it.

It will save automatically to the system. Let me get out of here. Okay. That should be it.

Sorry to put you out.

No problem. That makes it a little easier. Can you hear this clearly from here? You can pick the phone up if you want to.

Okay. Rene, can you hear me?

I can.

Okay. Take a deep breath.

Do I need to move my microphone? Is mine okay or do I need to move the microphone a little?

I think you're fine okay. You, too.

We'll do this recording. Then we'll save it. Once it's saved, we can send you a copy of it. If it's okay, it will be approved. There's no stopping in the middle and restart. It you basically have to restart the recording.

I don't want to accidentally hit something.

That's good enough. Perfect. Thank you.

Okay. Take another deep breath.

Are you there?

Hello?

Are you there?

Now we're set up over there on my laptop and there won't be any ambient noise.

Okay. All right.

I don't want to move nothing else, just in case.

Mirdza Fernandez has joined the conference.

All right. Rene, you there?

I'm here.

Oh, my gosh. I'm so frazzled.

Take a deep breath. Don't worry.

I've been to four different desks. If we have to rerecord it later, we'll rerecord it later. I'm not going to be too upset about it.

I would like to do the best I can.

Getting it done is great but don't make yourself crazy.

If I start talking and get in the flow, I will be okay.

I will put myself on mute. So feel free to start whenever you're ready.

Okay.

Welcome to the webben apartment in my name is Gwen Montgomery and I'm a member of the policy branch. Joining me is Rene fr of the relationships branch. We will Ben the webinar on praising performance -- start this again. I have to start it again. Luckily we just started.

Just so you know, I can hear every little knows in the background. Sounds like doors closing, drawers closing.

I'm in the OJT room. I will do my best.

They have two doors, right?

Yes.

I wonder if we should put recording in progress. I think a lot of people use it as a cut through.

You remember the exact room I'm in.

Yes. I wonder if we should, handwritten note. Otherwise, you're going to hear that through the whole thing, I'm afraid. What do you think. Is Mirdza still in there with you?

No. She's gone. Hold on one second. Let me see if I can get something.

All right. Let's try this again.

Welcome to the appraising performance webinar. My name is Gwen Montgomery and joining me is ren may wing. Together we will be presenting this webinar on appraising performance. The goals and objectives of this webinar are to provide information for establishing effective performance plans, to provide tips for engaging in meaningful communication which clearly states the performance expectations and observations and allows for employee feedback and to

identify some best practices and practices to avoid in end of the year performance appraisals. A rule of thumb is that to establish effective performance plans, supervisors must develop performance elements and standards that are linked to the strategic goals of the agency, program and work unit and prepare it with feedback from employees. Now let's discuss the components starting with the performance elements. A performance element is an activity, task or responsibility on which the employee will be rated. Performance plans must contain at least three but no more than seven performance elements. Each element must be designated as critical or noncritical. They must include at least one critical element and supervisory at least two. The mandatory critical elements are equal opportunity and civil rights and supervision. Depending on your agency, this supervision --

I'm not worried at all. This makes it okay except if I mess up you have to do all yours again, too.

I was only a minute real.

We're good.

No worries.

Bus I've got stuff clicking all over my screen. All right. Last time.

Let me try this again. One more time.

Okay. Not doing anything. Mark told meet numbers have to start counting down.

Do you want to go grab him or something? What should we do?

Okay. Let me give it a second because I've been clicking quite a few times.

Okay.

I hate to keep going through it and we go through the same thing and it's not recording. Hold on one second.

Okay.

All right. Here we go.

Okay.

Mark was just over here and it's not working again. Maybe I'm doing something wrong.

Let's try it one more time. To service and record. All right, guys. I'm done playing with this thing, Rene. I'm getting very frustrated.

I understand.

Okay. Here we go.

Welcome to the appraising performance webinar. My name is Gwen Montgomery. Joining me is Rene wing of the afist employee relations branch. We will be presenting this webinar on appraising performance much the goals and objectives are to provide information for establishing effective performance plans, provide tips for engaging in meaningful communication which clearly states the performance, expectationings, observations and feedback and to identify some best practices and practices to avoid when con cucting -- conducting mid-year progress reviews. A rule of thumb is that to establish effective performance plans, supervisors must develop standards for the work union net and prepare the performance plans for consideration with feedback from their employees. Now let's talk about the components of the performance plan, starting with the performance elements. A performance element is an activity, task or responsibility on which the employee will be rated. Performance plans must contain at least three but no more than seven performance elements. Each element must be des Nateed as critical -- designated as critical or noncritical. The mandatory critical elements for supervisory plans are equal opportunity civil rights and supervision. The supervision may be entitled human resource mrkts resource management or supervision management and leadership. We're often asked how do you determine if an element is critical or noncritical. There are a couple questions you can ask to find out. Is the element a major component of the employee's work? Does the element address individual performance only? Does the element require a significant amount of time? Are there consequences for performing this work in an unacceptable level? Are there statutory or regulatory requirements which must be met while performing work associated with this element? If you answered yes to any of the questions, then this should be designated as critical. Performance standards should address the quantity, equally tip and cost effectiveness. Performance standards set the retention level for the job by describing performance expected in order to be fully successful. We should also note it is recommended that the standard describes performance that exceeds the level as well F you choose not to describe this level, be prepared to provide examples of such work should the employee require this. Should be within the employees control or ability to achieve. The standard must be challenging but attainable. You must not use absolute standards. Absolute standards allow for no margin of error. These stasheds are only accepted where a single failure could result in the loss of life, injury or et cetera. That's the only time you should use slight standards. The performance standards should be measurable and objective. We're often asked to comment on draft plans. How will this standard be mesh ?urd order to determine -- measured in order to determine the rating. The percentage of cases completed within the deadline or the number of days to complete a report. Once you've established performance measures you must have a mechanism in place to obtain the data. Some could be data reports, weekly reports or emails regarding employee performance. Some additional things to think about the performance cycle runs from October 1 through September 30 of each year. We're often asked if supervisors have to wait to make changes to an employee's plan the answer is nossments -- no. Performance plans can be revised at any time. Supervisors should revise and forward the plan to the employee as soon as changes are made. Let me note if you make changes to the employee's performance plan. The employee must be on the revised plan for a minimum of 90 days before being evaluated or rated. Any changes that you make to their performance plan must be made by June 30. While we're on the topic of revising plans, supervisors should also review employee position descriptions periodically to ensure they are up

to date and consistent with the employee's plans. Okay. To recap. When you're preparing or revising plans. Supervisors should consider the following? Are the elements in line with the departmental agency and program strategic plans? Are the performance expectations clear? Are the standards written at the fully successful level? Can you provide examples at a successful rating? Are the standard results oriented? Are they attainable, challenging, measurable? Do the standards allow for some paragraph paragraph -- margin of error. Are both documents up to date? We should note that success in the area of performance management requires more than just a great performance plan you and your employee musts will be able to communicate to get the work completed, listening skills are essential to accomplish this. Success requires two-way communications. Supervisors must ensure employees are actively engaged in the performance plans and be given the opportunity to give feedback during formal review meetings. When meeting with your employees to discuss their performance plan, supervisors should prepare for the meeting before hand. Have the plan ready to discuss with the employee. You may want to send them a copy before the meeting. You want to communicate changes to the plan. You want to clearly har tick cue late your performance expectations, aout employee to explain or understand the elements and standards and answer their questions. Most importantly, inform the employee that you will be providing performance feedback regularly and not just during mid-year progress reviews. You want to make sure there are no surprises to the employee regarding their performance or your performance expectations during a performance year. We've included a couple of scenarios as part of this webinar. Let's try the first one. You've hired Tara as the new employee on your staff. She's new to the office and her position and is uncertain of her duties. How do you communicate her job duties to her? Should you, a, assign her work? You believe that employees should generally learn by doing. B, have a more senior employee service her mentor. She would learn by observation. C, schedule a meeting after her start date. Provide her with her performance plan and discuss the goals and duties of her position or D, tell her to read her office manual and review the program's mission on the website. In this case the appropriate course of action would be to schedule a meeting within 30 days of her start date. Provide a copy of the job description and discussion her duties and goals and performance expectations with her. Make sure she understands her duties and answer any questions. So the correct answer is C. Let's try another scenario. You're working on her performance plan her duties include preparing and finalizing documents. What would be the accepten way to write this standard? A, documents prepared for signature, 98% error treatment of B, finalize correspondents as requested. Corrections by supervisors and staff should be few and minor or C, documents are returned more than twice for correction and or spelling, gram mar and punctuation errors. In this scenario it would be to minimal errors, corrections by supervisor or staff should be few or minor. This standard allows for errors and identifies who will review the work and the performance expectation after the review. Now let's talk a bit about mid-year progress reviews. In may cord dance with the code of federal regulations, supervisors must conduct at least one formal mid-year progress review. Supervisors must complete all mid-year progress reviews for eligible employees by April 30th. It includes those placed on a performance plan for 90 days or more prior to the mid-year progress period. When preparing for the mid-year progress reviews, it's a good ged to review the employees plan. Ask each employee to submit a list of accomplishments which occurred since the beginning of the performance year. You should also review all performance related documentation. This could be emails from customers, activity reports and notes taken. During the meeting you should be spefnlgt it's a good idea to go over performance elements and identify accomplishments and observe performance associated with each element. You should

also ask the employee for feedback. How did they feel about the work performed up to this point of the performance year? Are there any suggestions? Is there anything you as a supervisor can do to get work completed. Completing mid-year progress reviews including documenting at the bottom of the form. Both supervisor and employee must initial the box. Once signed, AD435A is filed in the employee's performance folder. AD35 forms are not required to be isn't to the section. Supervisors must will certify completion of all mid-year progress reviews for their employees. This certification will be requested by your administrator officer. The merger officer will compile and forward it to the polybranch. The policy branch will report the data to the department to be scored and incorporated in the secretary's report. Because of this, it is imperative that supervisors complete the mid-year progress review in a timely manner. At this point I'm going to turn over the webinar to Rene.

Thank you so much, Gwen. Hi, everybody. We're going to start off my section with a few more scenarios. We're still following tarren. She's a hard worker. Unfortunately, she has been problems understanding her full scope of duties. A, do nosmght she's a hard worker. Mistakes will help her understand her job. B, counsel her and say her performance is not good as expected. Tell her if you -- she does not improve you will put her on a performance plan or meet with her, reiterate your clarifications and ask for her input and suggested training opportunities. In this particular situation, the correct answer is C. You want it go over those performance standards again and ensure that they reflect what you're expect of her and meet with her and reiterate those expectations. Ask for the pin put so she understands what it is you need and it can come from either side. Either she can say she needs training in an area or you can say I would like you to take the specific training. A will lead the employee to believe she's doing the job to the expectations she's had and it's not a fair response to her situation. B might seem like a possible move, Bush, remember, she is just starting to have problems, so it just might be you need no clarify those expectations and make sure she understands them. Another scenario. Three months have now passed and tarren is clear. She know was she's supposed to be doing. She's working hard but lately has been make more serious errors. Her performance is now borderline unacceptable. How are you going to address this particular situation? Here's four options for you. Tell her she's doing fine. You'll address it at the formal evaluation. B, meet with her to discuss the serious concerns and place her on performance warning or pip. Consider signing a mentor and the mentor can do the work for her if needed or D, take away her duties on those key projects. The proper answer in this is B. Again, if you're doing A, telling her she's doing fine you'll address it at the formal, you're not doing her favors and may end up with one of knows surprise issues at the end of the year. Part of C might be a good idea, assigning a mentor, it's never a good idea to have someone else do work for someone. D may sound appealing because you don't have to worry about the mistakes impacting you or your section's reputation or ability to get the job done. However, it's in the a proper way it approach performance issues. Another thing to be aware of, in our regulations, 4040-430 which we'll have a link at the end of the presentation does state if at any time during the performance appraisal periods that an employee's performance is determined to be unacceptable, the rating official must a, note fight employee in writing of the critical element or elements for complt performance is unacceptable and B they have to inform the employee of the standards that must be attained to demonstrate acceptable performance. So pretty much what that means you need to place the employee on a pip once it has been determined that they are not meeting fully successful. So let's talk a little bit about conducting those end of year performance ratings. Having your employees write up their

accomplishments ahead of time is a very useful tool for you. Many managers also find it's helpful if they ask their employees to arrange their accomplishments so they match up with each performance standard. You can find helpful information to share with your employees on writing their accomplishment reports in the tips for writing accomplishment reports which are included in the resources information at the end of today's session. It's especially important to explain the rating you're giving an employee. Employees will come to expect a certain rating, so be prepared to logically explain why a rating has changed from the previous year. Also, be prepared to listen and take under advisement an employee's rationale. Keep in mind that most employees within the agency will have the right to file an administrative or negotiated grievance under a bargaining unit agreement. There have been many grievances that could have been avoided had effective communication occurred at this point in the cycle. We've also included a link to the performance discussion guide in the resources section at the end of the presentation. It's an excellent tool for you to use in providing that feedback. We've pulled together some best practices. You've heard Gwen earlier to say prepare for the meeting and have a plan ready. This is important. It also helps you stay in control of the meeting and will assist you in coming back to the meeting if the meeting begins to derail. You want to set that stage. Location and time are very important. Find a private setting and allow for ample time. Performance reviews should never take place within earshot of any other employees. Two-way communication is important. You want to encourage employee input and listen. Again, like Gwen said, you want to make sure you're re-evaluating those plans each year to make sure they accurately reflect what they're doing. This is another opportunity for you to get your employee's input. Ask them if they have suggestions. Place employees who are reassigned to your section on standards within 30 days of arrival. If it's temporary and expected to last less than 90 days you will not be putting them on standards. Interim ratings. You want to conduct those interim ratings for employees and supervisors who will be leaving the unit. This is especially important if you as the supervisor will be leaving. So we have another scenario. After counseling and written warning on expectations, Tarren's performance improves and you rate her successful. However, she disagrees and believes she deserves a superior rating. Tell her you're pleased with her or show her areas of improvement. B, tell Tarren you're the supervisor and you make the rules. C, ignore it. Or D, tell her she's lucky you're patient with her. I know some of those are kind of funny and not back of your mind you're thinking I wish I could say that. But the correct answer is A. You want her to know you're happy with her performance. There's nothing wrong with fully successful. Let her know if she desires to reach the superior standards, here are the steps she needs to take. Not only does it help the employee to know what they can do to bring them steps up to that rating but it is a helpful piece for you too to see why someone did not reach that level. Obviously, those other three options would not be conducive to creating an environment where an employee felt valued and encouraged. Scenario six, just before you conduct her rating, you learned that Tarren has filed an EEO complaint against you. Should you mention the EEO complaint during the end of the year meeting? Here's some possible answers. A, calmly explain to Tarren that you're concerned about her EEO complaint. Discuss it and try to obtain a resolution to the complaint. B, tell Tarren that only top performers do well in your unit and challenging management's decision does not help or C, keep the discussion to Tarren's performance and don't mention the EEO complaint. In this case the answer is C. You want to make sure you keep anything involving the EEO in that arena. You need to move away from trying to address EEO complaints outside of the process. You will have the opportunity within that process to discuss the complaint and work toward a resolution. You should not discuss an EEO complaint in any other form other than that guided by it. You

definitely want to stay away from B. Doing something like this can lead to what's called the chilling effect and you'll get yourself into hot water pretty dark quick. Another scenario. While conducting her performance evaluation, she brings up the EEO complaint. She says she wants to discuss it with you. How do you handle it? Is it A, tell tarren you're interested in discussing the concerns but prefer the mediation. B, since she brought it up this presents an excellent opportunity to tell her that it requires you to dust. It C ignore her. D, ask what her complaint was about, why she has been discriminated against and discuss merits fully or e immediately and the meeting. The answer in this case is A. You want to tell Erin that you prefer to discuss them in mediation. You're in the allowed to discuss EEO matters outside the process of which mediation is a apartment while B may seem logical, you have to refrain from discussing her issues in this forum. With regard to C, you want to continue with the rating meeting but you don't want to ignore her. You want her to know you're interested in what she has to say but you want top utilize the EEO process. If she continues to bring it up, you need to give her the same answer that this particular meeting is not the correct forum, but you are looking forward to discussing it with her at a later date. B is left to mediation and e is your last resort. If this happens, contact your employer relations specialist for further guidance. We discussed best practices. Now we want to discuss some practices you should avoid. It is nearly impossible for an employee to do the job you requires in upcommunicate to them your expectations. Be sure to not only let an employee know what you expect from them but find out what the employee expects from you and how you can help them succeed. You always want to re main objective. You may have several employees with the same or similar job duties. You want to track everyone's standards and there's clear justification for different ratings. I know you may have several employees who do similar work. So make sure you're applying expectations to all of them. You also want to be very careful about mixing performance and conduct issues. I would encourage you to work with your assigned employee specialist. The two issues have different tools to help you deal with them. You want it make sure you're using the right tool for the job. Some additional practices to avoid. This first practice may seem quite logical but it's one you need to be sure and examine for signs that you're upset. Feel free to take a break, if necessary, or reschedule the meeting for a later time. These last two bullets are something we have discussed already, but we want to be very sure that you know you must not discuss anything related to an EEO complaint or any oth are process. You also don't want to take any notes relating to EEO in the performance time. Keep in mind that everything you write, either pen to paper, email or some other medium is possibly discoverable and you should assume at some point it will end up in front of the employee. Be very mindful about what you put in writing. You want to make sure it's very clear and conveys the message standing completely on its own. A few more practices to avoid. You want to make sure you're treating the employee as a person. Talking down to an employee will usually result in them tuning you out. Do not diagnose the problem for an employee. Let them tell you. You want top present the bills results or nonresults. If they bring up a medical issue, get in touch with the acome dpation staff. Feel free to contact your employer relations specialist and they can refer you to the correct person. Now as Gwen stated earlier, you do not want to spring surprises on an employee. This is especially true at end of the year rating. At this point an employee should be fully aware of deficiencies in their performance and preferably they will already be on a pip. Now we've come to the and of the session and we wanted to give you some resources. We've pulled together these resources for you in hopes they will help you. First, there are some excellent courses you can take advantage of. They're all free and available for you at any time. If you've taken them before and want a refresher, feel free to take them again. There are resources

on the web. The first is the 5CFR section, which is the framework for sering we do. Hopefully in all the oth Earl documents we've taken that very dry reading and put it into something usable. If you would like to see where it all started,ous go to that sie. the performance tool kit for supervisors is an excellent site that's been put together but I Gwen's group. I would suggest in your reading that this be your very first sto. here's some additional web resources. The department has put together a very good guide on performance plans that you can find at the top address. The other two or on writing reports and guides for supervisors and employers for participating in effective discussion. I would suggest you share both of those documents with your employees. Some additional sites, this first one is the performance management calendar. This calendar will give you helpful information while we've given you some due dates such as April 33th, you want to make sure you're checking the calendar. At anytime something could come along that will change the dates. We get new directives from the department or something like. That be sure you're checking the calendar on a daily bay sissments the next three sites contain those pertinent directives with regard to our performance management program as well as the conduct and responsibilities expected of all employees. Crop want to make sure that you're providing this lamps document to all employ -- last document to all employees. This is referred in section 17 of the AD435 where an employee certify's they've received a copy of the regulations. You want it make sure you're giving your employee a sufficient time to review the document and ask you any questions they may have. You may feel free to give a call to your employee relations specialist if you need clarification on the guidelines. We also wanted to give you the websites for each of our branches. The first one is Gwen's branch. They have a lot of relly helpful information on their website. I would highly suggest you check this out. If you have questions regarding employee relations, we have two employee relations branches. The one I'm assigned to and the other branch services those employees covered under AMS off gypsa. So feel free to check those websites. So at this time we just want to thank you for listening to this webinar and encourage you to contact us if you wish to discuss this topic further or you have any questions. You can feel free to submit those questions to either of us. Go ahead and send them to my email as shown on the screen and we welcome any feedback and future topics you would like to see covered. We hope you have a wonderful day. [Event concluded]

Okay. So it will take a whole for this to process and come up on mark's -- let me just see.

For the closed captioner, I think we're done, so thank you. [Event concluded]