

# FNCS PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT TRAINING FOR EMPLOYEES

Human Resources Division

Employee and Labor Relations Branch

2014

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# GOALS OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

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- Attract, develop and retain quality employees from diverse backgrounds and ensure they perform at high levels
- Focus on achievement and accountability
- Recognize and distinguish consistent high performers

## USDA'S/FNCS'S FIVE-LEVEL PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM IS MEANT TO:

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- Align performance plans with Agency goals
- Focus work on those activities that are most important to mission accomplishment
- Hold all employees accountable for achieving their part of mission results to support the Agency goals
- Identify top performers
- Reward individuals for contributions to the Agency goals

# PERFORMANCE WORK PLAN (PWP) REQUIREMENTS:

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- Must contain at least three elements and no more than seven total elements.
- At least one critical element must link to the Agency's mission, goals and outcomes.
- All plans must contain a pre-generated critical element related to EEO/Civil Rights and Cultural Transformation.
- Performance elements must be supplemented with measurable standards that help define performance at the fully successful level.

# PERFORMANCE ELEMENTS:

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- Describe the actual work to be performed during the performance cycle.
- Describe a major and important requirement of the job upon which an employee is rated.
- **Performance Standards:**
- Describe the work identified by the element in terms of measurable standards to identify the expectation for fully successful performance or better.

# CRITERIA FOR MEASURABLE STANDARDS:

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- **Qualitative:** Accuracy, appearance, or usefulness of the work effort.
- **Quantitative:** Number of products generated, services provided or a general result.
- **Timeliness:** Completion times, usually expressed as how quickly, when, or by what date the work must be produced.
- **Cost-effectiveness:** Dollar savings or cost control that can be documented and measured.
- **Manner of Performance:** Conditions in which an individual's behavior has an effect on performance.

# MEASURABLE STANDARDS

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- All five types of measures do not need to be in every critical element.
- Need to focus on the important measures as related to the specific critical element.
- Can be numeric, have a range or be descriptive.

# THREE ELEMENT RATING LEVELS

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When accomplishing a rating, element will be assigned a rating level by measuring how performance element met against the established standards.

Identified rating levels are :

- ✘ Exceeds
- ✘ Meets Fully Successful
- ✘ Does Not Meet Fully Successful

# FIVE SUMMARY RATING LEVELS

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The resulting summary rating level will be one of five possible values, based on all combined element ratings:

- ✘ Outstanding
- ✘ Superior
- ✘ Fully Successful
- ✘ Marginal, and
- ✘ Unacceptable

# ANNUAL PERFORMANCE CYCLE MILESTONES:

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- Performance Cycle is October 1 – September 30.
- Supervisors must provide PWPs to employees within 30 days of a new performance cycle or when duties change significantly.
- Supervisors must conduct an interim progress review at least once during the performance cycle (mid-year review).
- Employees are encouraged to provide feedback to the supervisor regarding their accomplishments.
- Supervisors must complete a rating of record for all employees who served under a PWP for > 90 days within 60 days of the end of the performance cycle.

# EMPLOYEE'S RESPONSIBILITIES:

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- Provide input into the development of their PWPs.
- Confirm their understanding of expectations.
- Communicate with their supervisor throughout the performance cycle.
- Assist in identifying training needs to enhance their performance.
- Provide input on accomplishments at the end of the performance cycle.

## RATING OFFICIAL'S/SUPERVISOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES:

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- Explain the link between the work unit outputs, employee's duties and Agency's goals.
- Ask employees to provide input into development of their PWPs.
- Formalize PWPs within established timeframes.
- Conduct/document at least one formal review (mid-year) and provide informal feedback throughout the performance cycle.
- Complete a year-end performance rating for all employees as required.

# REVIEWING OFFICIAL'S RESPONSIBILITIES:

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- Review PWP elements and standards for consistency across the work unit.
- Approve PWPs for all employees in the work unit.
- Review/approve year-end performance ratings before rating officials/supervisors communicate ratings to employees.

# COMMUNICATION

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- A critical tool in the performance management process.
- Supervisors need to communicate:
  - work requirements and expectations,
  - encourage continued desired performance, and
  - describe how to improve performance, as appropriate.
- Open and continual communication leads to a more productive, motivated workforce and reduces stress and waste.
- Should not be one-sided; employees are encouraged to ask questions and voice concerns as they arise.

# CONTACT

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For any questions related to Performance Management please contact your servicing Employee Relations Specialist.

USDA PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT  
POLICY CAN BE LOCATED AT [USDA.GOV](http://USDA.GOV)  
EMPLOYEE WEBPAGE