

PERFORMANCE ELEMENTS:

The generic performance elements and their "meets" standards are listed below. Program or position specific performance elements and standards can be established, using the FSIS Form 4430-10a. The total number of performance elements cannot exceed 7 of which at least 2 must be critical. To the extent possible, supervisors should tailor selected elements and standards to show the link towards the FSIS strategic mission and goals.

- (1) MISSION SUPPORT (Mandatory critical element for all employees):** Has demonstrated basic understanding of mission and organizational goals and priorities that supported or directly protected the public's health from foodborne hazards and intentional harm. Assignments were completed in accordance with applicable agency regulations, policies, procedures, and guidelines. Work product was responsive to the supervisor's and the organization's stated priorities and requirements. Adhered to safety and occupational health practices and procedures and maintained a safe and healthful work environment.
- (2) COMMUNICATIONS:** Oral and written communications were clear, correct, timely, and presented in an understandable manner. Employee listened effectively and clarified information as needed. Supervisor and coworkers were kept informed of issues and problems when necessary. Information and guidance provided was timely and correct.
- (3) SUPERVISION (Mandatory critical element for rating supervisors):** Supervisor contributed to the organization's staffing plan. (A staffing plan describes the number and types of employees in positions a supervisor has authority to carry out the mission.) Work was assigned in a fair and effective manner among qualified employees. Technical guidance to subordinate staff was given in a timely manner. Performance management was implemented in accordance with procedures, especially in the preparation and explanation of performance standards, the communication of performance feedback, the coaching of improved performance, and the completion of accurate and timely performance appraisals. The supervisor completed any required supervisory training. Issues, concerns, or problems were handled promptly. To the extent possible, staff was properly trained and complied with occupational health and safety programs. Management decisions were supported and implemented within appropriate timeframes.
- (4) PROGRAM MANAGEMENT:** Managed program(s) and resolved issues and problems within the employee's control. Monitored all aspects of program(s) for quality, effectiveness, and consistency. Program plans and guidance were responsive to objectives and requirements of the Agency. Policy instructions were appropriately issued and were accurate. Evaluated effectiveness of work and adjusted plans accordingly.
- (5) SPECIAL PROJECTS:** Special projects were completed on time in a competent, accurate, and thorough manner. Completed projects complied with regulations and procedures. Special projects are completed independently, or reflected research and collaboration with others as required.
- (6) RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS:** Researched and analyzed issues, reports, problems, questions, or other assignments in a timely manner. Made use of available reference sources. Raised questions or issues with supervisor or senior staff so that any encountered problems could be addressed. Recommendations, decisions, and work products were appropriately science-based, logical, and defensible.
- (7) CUSTOMER SERVICE:** Worked with customers to develop a mutual understanding of their requirements. For discrete assignments, provided requested information, work products, or advice that was timely, responsive, and accurate. For recurring products and services, maintained existing standards of customer service for delivery of products and services. Achieved quality end products and demonstrated a commitment to continuous improvement of the organization's products and services. Kept supervisor and/or team leader informed of difficult an/or controversial issues and unique problems. Took action to effectively resolve problems before they had an adverse impact on the organization or other employees.
- (8) EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND CIVIL RIGHTS (Mandatory critical element for supervisors):** Performed all duties in a manner which demonstrated fairness, cooperation, and respect toward coworkers, office visitors, and all others in the performance of official business. Demonstrated a commitment to EO/CR policies and responsibilities of Agency and Departmental goals of valuing a diverse, yet unified workforce.
- (9) PERSONAL CONTACTS - EO/CR (Mandatory critical element for nonsupervisory employees):** Projected a positive and professional image of USDA. Performed all duties in a manner which consistently demonstrated fairness, cooperation, and respect toward coworkers, customers, and all others in the performance of official business. Complied with EO/CR guidelines and policies.
- (10) RESOURCE MANAGEMENT:** Monitored allocated resources, including people, time, technology, facilities, contracts, and funds. Maintained complete and accurate records of expenditures and utilization of resources. Routinely utilized resources in an efficient and effective manner. Ensured that all resources were guarded against waste, loss, unauthorized use, and misappropriation. Introduced and managed technology solutions when cost effective to do so.
- (11) INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE TEAM:** Displayed dependability and reliability. Promoted open communication. Contributed creative ideas and actively participated in team meetings resulting in added value to the team's products and services. When problems arose, explored causes and assisted in resolving them. Worked with team members to implement decisions. Demonstrated an open-mind to new ideas and approaches in implementing the team's goals. Willingly accepted and acted on constructive criticism.

(12-14): To establish program specific elements, use FSIS Form 4430-10a.

Apply the following generic performance standards with relevant “bulleted goals or objectives.” These can be derived from:

1. Organizational mission statements.
2. Program plans.
3. Project plans.
4. Strategic plans.
5. Product and service standards.
6. Related references including:
 - a. Specific tasks.
 - b. Projects.
 - c. Programs assigned and explained to the employee.

At the end of the rating cycle, assignment of Exceeds levels must be accompanied by specific examples that demonstrate how the employee achieved Exceeds. The documentation must clearly describe the impact the employee’s accomplishments had in achieving the Agency’s public health mission or organizational goals.

ELEMENT (1) Mission Support (Mandatory critical for all employees)

Meets Standard: Has demonstrated basic understanding of mission and organizational goals and priorities that support or directly protect the public’s health from foodborne hazards and intentional harm. Assignments were completed in accordance with applicable Agency regulations, policies, procedures, and guidelines. Work product was responsive to the supervisor’s and the organization’s stated priorities and requirements. Adhered to safety and occupational health practices and procedures, and maintained a safe and healthful work environment.

Exceeds Standard: The assigned specific mission support goals and objectives were significantly exceeded in terms of quality, timeliness, cost effectiveness, customer satisfaction, or other measurable result. Virtually all applicable quantitative or qualitative criteria were exceeded.

ELEMENT (2) Communications

Meets Standard: Oral and written communications were clear, correct, timely, and presented in an understandable manner. Employee listened effectively and clarified information as needed. Supervisor and coworkers were kept informed of issues and problems when necessary. Information and guidance provided was timely and correct.

Exceeds Standard: Employee was skilled in communicating effectively with diverse audiences, including people with technical and non-technical backgrounds. Employee demonstrated a full range of communication skills, including such advanced techniques as preventing and resolving conflicts, influencing parties to take appropriate action, interpreting non-verbal communication, and successfully negotiating agreements and partnerships.

ELEMENT (3) Supervision (Mandatory critical element for rating supervisors)

Meets Standard: Supervisor contributed to the organization's staffing plan. (A staffing plan describes the number and types of employees and positions a supervisor has in their office to carry out the mission.) Work was assigned in a fair and effective manner among qualified employees. Technical guidance to subordinate staff was given in a timely manner. Performance management was implemented by procedures, especially in the preparation and explanation of performance standards, the communication of performance feedback, the coaching of improved performance, and the completion of accurate and timely performance appraisals. The supervisor completed any required supervisory training. Issues, concerns, or problems were handled promptly. To the extent possible, staff was properly trained and complied with occupational health and safety programs. Management decisions were supported and implemented within appropriate timeframes.

Exceeds Standard: The supervisor's staffing plans or work schedules were especially effective in anticipating mission, organizational, technologic, and personnel changes. This allowed the organization or unit to maximize on-board strength and retain key talent. The supervisor's accomplishments in defining, developing, coaching, appraising, and rewarding performance of subordinates served as a model to other supervisors. Relative to the organization's assigned resources, the unit's overall performance was significantly enhanced by the supervisor's administrative, management, and motivational skills—the organization directed achieved superior results.

ELEMENT (4) Program Management

Meets Standard: Managed program(s) and resolved issues and problems within the employee's control. Monitored all aspects of program(s) for quality, effectiveness, and consistency. Program plans and guidance were responsive to objectives and requirements of the Agency. Policy instructions were appropriately issued and were accurate. Evaluated effectiveness of work and adjusted plans accordingly.

Exceeds Standard: Demonstrated such thorough, logical, and effective project or program planning and management that employee's work methods, processes, and work products served as an example to others. Adapted conventional techniques to new and changing situations, using appropriate technology, policies, or science in achieving superior program or project results. Achieved successful program results by overcoming obstacles and facilitating and enabling the key contributions of customer, suppliers, or partners.

ELEMENT (5) Special Projects

Meets Standard: Special projects were completed on time in a competent, accurate, and thorough manner. Completed projects complied with regulations and procedures. Special projects were completed independently, or reflected research and collaboration with others as required.

Exceeds Standard: Employee anticipated and exceeded the needs of the project's internal or external customers in terms of project quality, timeliness, cost-effectiveness, or overall success. Employee regularly adjusted project priorities and schedules as appropriate, especially as resources changed or as the project was integrated with related programs and activities. Because of the employee's outstanding efforts, the project had greater than expected positive impact on the organization or its customers.

ELEMENT (6) Research and Analysis

Meets Standard: Researched and analyzed issues, reports, problems, questions, or other assignments in a timely manner. Made use of available reference sources. Raised questions or issues with supervisor or senior staff so that any encountered problems could be addressed. Recommendations, decisions, and work products were appropriately science-based, logical, and defensible.

Exceeds Standard: Demonstrated such thorough, logical, and professional research and analysis that employee's methods, processes, and work products serve as an example to others. Displayed persistence in tracking down hard-to-obtain information. Adapted conventional research and analysis techniques to new and changing situations, using appropriate technology, policies, or science in developing recommendations, conclusions, determinations, and final reports. Made effective recommendations for solving problems beyond immediate scope of responsibility.

ELEMENT (7) Customer Service

Meets Standard: Worked with customers to develop a mutual understanding of their requirements. For discrete assignments, provided requested information, work products, or advice that was timely, responsive, and accurate. For recurring products and services, maintained existing standards of customer service for delivery of products and services. Achieved quality end products and demonstrated a commitment to continuous improvement of the organization's products and services. Kept supervisor and/or team leader informed of difficult and/or controversial issues and unique problems. Took action to effectively resolve problems before they had an adverse impact on the organization or other employees.

Exceeds Standard: Demonstrated such thorough customer service that the employee's methods, processes, and work products serve as an example to others. Adapted conventional customer service techniques to new and changing situations, using appropriate technology, policies, or science in developing recommendations, conclusions, determinations, and final reports. Recommended improvements-to the existing customer service delivery system. Anticipated and responded to changing customer requirements, avoiding any gaps in service.

ELEMENT (8) EO/CR (Mandatory critical element for rating supervisors)

Meets Standard: Performed all duties in a manner which demonstrated fairness, cooperation, and respect toward coworkers, office visitors, and all others in the performance of official business. Demonstrated a commitment to EO/CR policies and responsibilities of Agency and Departmental goals of valuing a diverse, yet unified workforce.

Exceeds Standard: Supervisor was particularly effective in creating an atmosphere within the unit that encouraged diversity, sharing of information, ideas, or talents; and appropriate use and resolution of conflict. Supervisor challenged Agency, Program Area, or organizational actions that were exclusionary, even at the risk of own self-interest. Overall, the supervisor's actions and organizational results for this element served as an example to others.

ELEMENT (9) Personal Contacts-EO/CR (Mandatory critical element for nonsupervisory employees)

Meets Standard: Projected a positive and professional image of USDA. Performed all duties in a manner which consistently demonstrated fairness, cooperation, and respect toward coworkers, customers, and all others in the performance of official business. Complied with EO/CR guidelines and policies.

Exceeds Standard: Demonstrated such a professional image and considerate demeanor towards others that the employee's manner of establishing, conducting, and maintaining personal contacts serves as an example to others. Adapted existing communication style and techniques to new and changing situations and to diverse individuals and groups. Seized opportunities to coach and developed less skilled coworkers in effective personal contacts, EO/CR.

ELEMENT (10) Resource Management

Meets Standard: Monitored allocated resources, including people, time, technology, facilities, contracts, and funds. Maintained complete and accurate records of expenditures and utilization of resources. Routinely used resources in an efficient and effective manner. Ensured that all resources were guarded against waste, loss, unauthorized use, and misappropriation. Introduced and managed technology solutions when cost effective to do so.

Exceeds Standard: Excelled in the integrated management of all resources – people, technology, facilities, supplies, financial assets, time, and customer or supplier partnerships, thereby enabling the organization to exceed performance expectations. The employee served as a model to others in obtaining additional resources, deploying new technology, or meeting the mission despite significant reductions in resources.

ELEMENT (11) Individual Contributions to the Team

Meets Standard: Displayed dependability and reliability. Promoted open communication. Contributed creative ideas and actively participated in team meetings, resulting in added value to the team's products and services. When problems arose, explored causes and assisted in resolving them. Worked with team members to implement decisions. Demonstrated an open mind to new ideas and approaches in implementing the team's goals. Willingly accepted and acted on constructive criticism.

Exceeds Standard: Demonstrated advanced skills and especially significant contributions to the team by leading team meetings or activities, identifying obstacles to team performance and taking actions to overcome them, positively influencing others or negotiating solutions to problems, and building effective working relationships among team members. The employee serves as an example to others in effective collaboration and teamwork.