

State Human Resources Policy #E24-106.01

Employee Performance Management System

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DEFINITIONS

Agency – The Military Department of South Carolina/Office of the Adjutant General

Covered Employee - A Full-Time or Part-Time employee who is occupying a part or all of a Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) position who has completed the Probationary Period, and has a “Successful” or higher overall rating on the employee’s Employee Performance Evaluation, and who has grievance rights.

Established Review Date – The employee’s review date as established in accordance with State Human Resources Regulations (Exceptions: “Probationary” employees).

Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) – A numerical value expressing a percentage of time in hours and of funds related to a particular position authorized by the General Assembly.

Short Year Review – Any Performance Evaluation that evaluates an employee’s performance for a period of time less than twelve (12) months (Exceptions: “Performance Improvement Plan” reviews).

Short Year Planning Stage – Any Employee Performance Management System (EPMS) Planning Stage document covering a period of time less than twelve (12) months (Exception: “Performance Improvement Plans”).

Temporary Employee – A full-time or part-time employee who does not occupy an FTE position, whose employment is not to exceed one year, and who is not a covered employee.

Temporary Grant Employee – A full-time or part-time employee who does not occupy an FTE position and is hired to fill a position specified in and funded by a Federal grant, public charity grant, private foundation grant, or research grant and who is not a covered employee.

Time-Limited (Project) Employee – A full-time or part-time employee who does not occupy an FTE position who is hired to fill a position with time-limited project funding approved or authorized by the appropriate State authority, and who is not a covered employee.

Universal Review Date – The date prior to which all employees’ performance reviews are due.

FORMS

All forms noted for use in accordance with this Policy may be found at <https://scmd.sc.gov/state-operations/forms> under the “Human Resources” Section.

POLICY

1. The Military Department of South Carolina/Office of the Adjutant General (Agency) will utilize the Position Description/Employee Performance Management System (EPMS) as a constructive management tool to evaluate Agency positions and the individual work performance of each employee in our workforce.

2. The provisions of this Policy address the evaluation process of both Probationary and Covered Employees. Although not mentioned specifically in the Policy, employees exempt from coverage under the State Employee Grievance Procedure Act will also be given Performance Evaluations.

3. Raters and Reviewers will use the Position Description / Employee Performance Evaluation Form to conduct and document Performance Evaluations and Annual Performance Reviews.

a. The Position Description portion of the evaluation form is a record of the official duties and responsibilities of the position and is initially established by the Agency.

b. The Rater and the employee are responsible for keeping the Position Description current by reviewing the Administrative Data, Job Description, Essential Job Responsibilities and Success Criteria each time they complete the Planning Stage.

c. If there are significant changes or updates to the Planning Stages during an Evaluation Cycle, the Rater and the employee will update the Planning Stage, but the Review Date will not change.

4. Annual Performance Reviews

a. The Universal Review Date for the Agency is 01 July (Exceptions: "Probationary" employees).

b. The Performance Review date marks the beginning of a new review period.

c. All employees shall receive an Annual Performance Evaluation no more than 90 calendar days prior to the employee's performance review date.

(1) If an employee is on approved leave (with or without pay) for more than 30 consecutive workdays, the employee's performance review date may be advanced up to 90 days.

(2) A Covered Employee who receives a "Performance Improvement Plan" may have the performance review date advanced to coincide with the "Performance Improvement Plan" dates.

(3) Should the review date advance, an employee may receive a Short Year Planning Stage and a Short Year Review in order to move the employee back to the Universal Review Date.

d. All State employees must have at least one State employee in their rating scheme as their Rater or Reviewer.

e. If a Rater does not provide an employee an evaluation prior to the performance review date, the employee shall receive a "Successful" rating by default.

f. A Rater may not provide a Covered Employee an overall "Unsuccessful" appraisal or an "Unsuccessful" rating on any essential Job Responsibility or Objective which significantly impacts performance, without following the "Substandard Performance Process".

g. Raters will be evaluated on the timely completion of their employee's performance appraisals.

5. Probationary Periods

a. Raters will prepare a Planning Stage for each Probationary employee within 30 calendar days of the beginning of the Probationary Period.

b. Each employee in a "Probationary" status will be rated prior to the completion of a twelve (12) month Probationary Period. The Probationary Period may not be extended.

c. A Probationary Employee who receives a "Successful" rating on their Probationary Performance Review will obtain "Covered" status as a State employee (FTE only) and "Permanent" status in the class.

d. If a Rater does not provide a Probationary Employee a performance appraisal prior to the performance review date, the employee will receive a "Successful" rating by default and obtain "Covered" status as a State employee (FTE Only) and "Permanent" status in the class.

e. After satisfactory completion of the Probationary Period, an employee may receive a Short Year Planning Stage and a Short Year Review in order to move the employee to the Universal Review Date.

f. If an employee is not performing satisfactorily during the Probationary Period, the employee shall be terminated before becoming a Covered or Permanent employee.

g. Until an FTE employee has completed the Probationary Period and has a "Successful" or higher overall rating on the employee's evaluation, an FTE employee has no grievance rights under the State Employee Grievance Procedure Act. Therefore, the Agency is not required to follow the "Substandard Performance Process" to terminate a Probationary Employee.

h. The "Successful" rating is the equivalent to the "Meets" performance rating referenced in the State Employee Grievance Procedure Act.

i. The Performance Review date marks the beginning of a new review period.

6. Ongoing Performance Management

a. A Rater should provide performance feedback to employees throughout the review period. An unofficial mid-year review is encouraged to facilitate this communication between Raters and employees. In addition, various options are available to the Rater in conducting performance management.

b. A Rater may gather feedback to prepare the Performance Evaluation document and/or conduct unofficial evaluations more frequently than required in this Policy.

c. Whenever an employee's position description or responsibilities change significantly, the Rater should update the evaluation document to reflect that change.

7. Substandard Performance

a. FTE, Temporary Grant and Time Limited employees of the Agency who have successfully completed their Probationary period are entitled to adequate notice of substandard performance and the opportunity to improve the substandard performance before receiving an "Unsuccessful" rating and being removed from the position. Temporary employees are not entitled to notice of substandard performance prior to removal from the position or termination.

b. If at any time during the review period an FTE, Temporary Grant and Time Limited employees is considered "Unsuccessful" in any essential Job Responsibility or Objective, the Rater will provide the employee with a written Performance Improvement Plan. The Rater will issue a "Performance Improvement Plan" prior to issuing an "Unsuccessful" rating to an FTE, Temporary Grant and Time Limited employees Employee.

(1) The Performance Improvement Plan will be in writing, addressed to the employee, labeled as a "Performance Improvement Plan," and signed by the employee (witnessed, if the employee will not sign).

(2) The Performance Improvement Plan will list the Job Responsibility(s) and/or Objective(s) included on the employee's planning document that are considered "Unsuccessful Performance Requirements," with an explanation of deficiencies for each Job Responsibility and/or Objective.

(3) The notice will include the time period for improvement (no less than 30 days and no more than 120 days) and the consequences if no improvement is noted (i.e. termination, demotion, or reassignment), and a plan for meetings to discuss employee progress during the Performance Improvement Plan Period.

(4) The Rater or Reviewer will provide a copy of the Performance Improvement Plan to the employee and forward a copy of the signed Performance Improvement Plan to the State HRO who will place the Performance Improvement Plan in the employee's official personnel file.

c. The Rater and employee should participate in drafting a Performance Improvement Plan.

(1) The Performance Improvement Plan should include a list of ways to improve the deficiencies and other appropriate performance related recommendations.

(2) In those instances where the Rater and employee cannot agree upon the content of the Work Improvement plan; the Rater's decision shall be final.

d. During the Performance Improvement Plan Period, the employee and the Rater will have regularly scheduled meetings to discuss the employee's progress.

(1) The Rater will prepare documentation to verify that these counseling sessions were held.

(2) The Rater will ensure copies of this documentation are placed in the employee's official personnel file and copies provided to the employee upon request.

e. Once the time frame for improving substandard performance has been given, the employee must receive a written Performance Evaluation at the end of the Performance Improvement Plan Period or the employee will receive a "Successful" rating by default.

f. If the employee's performance is rated "Successful" or above, on all essential Job Responsibilities/Objectives noted in the Performance Improvement Plan by the end of the Performance Improvement Plan Period, employment shall continue.

g. If the employee is rated "Unsuccessful," on any essential Job Responsibility or Objective noted in the Performance Improvement Plan Notice by the end of the Performance Improvement Plan Period, the employee shall be removed from the position immediately (i.e., reassigned, demoted, terminated).

h. Ordinarily, the Performance Improvement Plan Period may not extend beyond the employee's review date. However, the performance review date may be advanced to coincide with the "Performance Improvement Plan" dates.

i. Should the performance review date be advanced and the employee receives a "Successful" or above rating on all essential Job Responsibilities/Objectives noted in the Performance Improvement Plan, the employee may require a Short Year Planning Stage and a Short Year Review in order to move the employee back to the Universal Review Date.

j. If an employee has been issued two (2) Performance Improvement Plan Notices within a 365-day period, and their performance drops to a substandard level on any essential Job Responsibility or Objective for a third (3rd) time within a 365-day period, the employee shall be removed from the position upon the third (3rd) recurrence of such substandard performance by issuing the "Unsuccessful" appraisal. A Performance Improvement Plan is not required on the third (3rd) occurrence

8. All Performance Evaluations will become a permanent part of the employee's official personnel file. Upon request, the Agency will furnish the employee with a copy of the Performance Evaluation with copies of all pertinent attachments including copies of the final Evaluation forms and copies of any Performance Improvement Plans.

PROCEDURE

1. Position Description

a. The employee should update the Position Description with the assistance and approval of the Rater. In those instances where the Rater and employee cannot agree upon the job duties, the Rater's decision is final. The Reviewer is responsible for reviewing and approving changes to the Position Description.

b. If there are changes in the Position Description, the Reviewer will forward the updated Position Description to the SC Military Department's State Human Resources Office (State HRO) for final review and approval. Significant changes in job duties may warrant a reclassification request; however, less significant changes in job duties will be considered updates. Once the Position Description changes are approved as appropriate, the employee and the Rater should complete the Planning Stage for the next evaluation period.

2. Planning Stage

a. The Rater will prepare a Planning Stage for each of their rated employees at the beginning of each rating period.

(1) The Rater and the rated employee will discuss the employee's Job Responsibilities (which include job duties and success criteria), Objectives, and Performance Characteristics for the next rating period at this time. The Rater and rated employee should participate in drafting the Planning Stage document.

(2) The Reviewer and the Rater should discuss the requirements for the coming year prior to the Planning Stage.

(3) The Rater may incorporate a team activity into the Planning Stage document. The team performance being evaluated could constitute a Job Responsibility, an Objective, or one criterion for a particular Job Responsibility or Objective. The Rater may also link the employee's training plan to the Planning Stage document.

(4) The Rater will maintain the signed copy of the Planning State at their level until time to conduct the evaluation.

b. Job Responsibilities

(1) The Rater and the employee shall determine the Job Responsibilities (which include job duties and success criteria) by reviewing the employee's Position Description. If the Position Description is not up-to-date, or if there is no Position Description, the Rater and the employee shall prepare a Position Description and submit it for approval. In those instances where the Rater and employee cannot agree upon the Job Responsibilities, the Rater's decision shall be final.

(2) The statement outlining the Job Responsibilities should include descriptive information about the performance expectations (Success criteria) of the Rater and should specify the expectations of the Rater for the employee to meet performance requirements.

c. Objectives

(1) Objectives shall be optional for all employees.

(a) An Objective should be included when the employee is assigned a special, non-recurring project or an assignment that is not included on the employee's position description.

(b) The statement outlining the Objective(s) should also include descriptive information about the performance expectations (success criteria) of the Rater and should specify the expectations of the Rater for the employee to meet performance requirements.

(2) Performance Characteristics

(a) The Agency will determine and provide the Performance Characteristics along with their definitions. Each Performance Characteristic shall be defined in the Planning Stage.

(3) The Performance Characteristics section shall be used as a communication tool to emphasize those performance characteristics that are important to success in performing the Job Responsibilities and Objectives included in the Planning Document.

3. Evaluation Stage

a. Job Responsibilities Evaluation

(1) The employee's Rater who has direct experience or knowledge of the work being performed shall conduct and document all Performance Evaluations.

(2) The Rater will evaluate the employee's performance in each of the employee's Job Responsibilities and Objectives based on the three (3) Levels of Performance. The three (3) Levels of Performance are:

- Exceptional (E) - Work that is above the criteria of the Job Responsibility or Objective throughout the rating period.
- Successful (S) - Work that meets the criteria of the Job Responsibility or Objective.
- Unsuccessful (U) - Work that fails to meet the criteria of the Job Responsibility or Objective.

b. Performance Characteristics Evaluation

(1) The Rater will assess the Performance Characteristics using a rating of "Pass" (Meets Requirements) or "Fail" (Fails to meet Requirements).

(2) The Performance Characteristics are not included in the overall performance rating.

c. Review. The next higher-level Supervisor (Reviewer) shall review the evaluation, unless the Rater is the Agency Head, prior to the evaluation being discussed with the employee.

(1) The Reviewer may attach additional comments to the evaluation and, in the attachment, may take exception to any of the Rater's evaluation points.

(2) The Reviewer has the authority to change the evaluation completed by the Rater. If the Reviewer elects to change the rating, the Reviewer will note the change and associated justification on the evaluation document.

d. The final Evaluation must bear the signature of the Rater, the Reviewer and the employee, if possible.

(1) If any party refuses to sign the evaluation, a notation of this refusal will be made on the performance evaluation.

(2) If possible, a witness (a State employee) will sign to acknowledge the party refused to sign the evaluation, or the employee, Rater or Reviewer is unavailable for signature and why.

e. The Reviewer will forward the completed and signed evaluation to the State HRO at evaluations@scmd.sc.gov.

f. The State HRO will complete the processing of the evaluation and place the completed evaluation in the employee's official personnel file.

4. Overall Performance Rating

a. The State HRO will calculate the Overall Performance Rating

(1) Calculating Total Level of Performance

(a) The three (3) Levels of Performance are assigned the following numerical values:

- Exceptional (E) = 3
- Successful (S) = 2
- Unsuccessful (U) = 1

(b) The Overall Level of Performance is calculated adding the numerical values for each Responsibility or Objective, and dividing the total number by the total number of Responsibilities and Objectives that were evaluated.

b. The values ranges for Overall Level of Performance are:

- Exceptional (E) – 3.00-2.50
- Successful (S) – 2.49-1.50
- Unsuccessful (U) - 1.49-0.0