

**EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (EPMS) – NUMBER 2531**

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**GENERAL INFORMATION**

All performance appraisals shall be made in writing by the employee's supervisor (the rater) who has direct experience or knowledge of the work being performed. The appraisal shall be reviewed by the next higher level supervisor (the reviewer), unless the rater is the Agency Director, prior to the appraisal being discussed with the employee. The reviewer may attach additional comments to the appraisal and, in the attachment may take exception to any of the rater's appraisal points; however, the reviewer may not change the appraisal completed by the rater. Whenever an employee's job responsibilities change significantly, the appraisal document should be revised to reflect that change. The final appraisal must bear the signature of the rater, the reviewer, and the employee, if possible. If any party refuses to sign an appraisal, a notation will be made on the performance appraisal. If possible, a witness should acknowledge that a party refused to sign the appraisal.

All performance appraisals shall become a permanent part of the employee's official personnel file. Upon request, the agency shall furnish the employee with a copy of the performance appraisal with copies of all pertinent attachments, including the form completed at the time of the planning stage and the final appraisal form.

The provisions of this policy address the appraisal process of both probationary and covered employees. Although not mentioned specifically in this policy, employees exempt from coverage under the State Employee Grievance Procedure Act shall also be given annual performance appraisals.

**UNIVERSAL REVIEW DATE**

Agency employees shall be reviewed prior to January 1st, the agency's universal review date. The agency will maintain the review dates currently established in accordance with the State Human Resources Regulations so that the review date may be reinstated, if necessary.

**DEFINITIONS**

Universal Review Date - The date prior to which all classified employee's performance reviews are due. January 1st will be the universal review date for the agency (Exceptions: "probationary" employees and "trial" employees).

Short-Year Review - Any performance appraisal that evaluates an employee's performance for a period of time less than twelve (12) months (Exceptions: "trial" period reviews and "warning notice" reviews).

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Short-Year Planning Stage - Any EPMS planning stage document covering a period of time less than twelve (12) months (Exception: "trial" period planning stages).

### **LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE**

There shall be three levels of performance to rate each job function and objective and to rate the overall performance:

- Exceptional: Work that is above the criteria of the job function throughout the rating period.
- Successful: Work that meets the success criteria of the job function.
- Unsuccessful: Work that fails to meet the success criteria of the job function.

Performance characteristics shall not be rated by the three levels of performance but shall be given a rating of pass or fail:

- Pass - Meets requirements
- Fail - Fails to meet requirements

### **PLANNING STAGE**

Each employee shall have a planning stage conducted at the beginning of each rating period. The employee's job functions (which include job duties and success criteria), objectives, and performance characteristics for the next rating period will be discussed at this time. These items, as included in the planning stage, are described below. The rater and the employee should participate in drafting the planning stage document. The reviewing officer and the rater should discuss the requirements for the coming year prior to the planning stage. A rater may incorporate a team activity into the planning stage document. The team performance being evaluated could constitute a job function, an objective, or one criteria for a particular job function or objective. A rater may also link the employee's training plan to the planning stage document.

#### **JOB FUNCTIONS**

The rater and the employee shall determine the job functions (which include the 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, one should be prepared and submitted for approval. In those instances where the rater and employee cannot agree upon the job functions, the rater's decision shall be final. The statement outlining the job function should include descriptive information about the performance expectations (success criteria) of the rater. The descriptive statements should specify the expectations of the rater for the employee to meet performance requirements. Each job function will be rated during the evaluation stage based on the three levels of performance. It shall be mandatory for all raters to be evaluated on the timely completion of each employee's performance appraisal.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

Objectives shall be optional for all employees. An objective should be included when the employee is assigned a special, non-recurring project or assignment that is not included

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on the employee's position description. The statement outlining the objective(s) should also include descriptive information about the performance expectations (success criteria) of the rater. The descriptive statement should specify the expectations of the rater for the employee to be successful. Each objective shall be rated in the evaluation stage based on the three levels of performance.

### **PERFORMANCE CHARACTERISTICS**

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 functions and objectives included in the planning document. Each performance characteristic will be defined in the planning stage and rated as "pass" or "fail" in the evaluation stage. The performance characteristics section shall not be weighted in the determination of the overall performance rating.

It shall be mandatory for all managers and supervisors to be rated on the performance characteristic of "promoting equal opportunity." (Promoting equal opportunity includes such areas as hiring, promotion, or placement; level of personal and organizational commitment to equal opportunity; progress toward achieving a fully integrated and representative work force; and contribution toward minority programs and other social/economic equal opportunity goals.)

### **ONGOING PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

A rater should continue to provide performance feedback to employees throughout the review period. An unofficial mid-year review is encouraged to facilitate the communication between raters and employees. In addition, various options are available to the rater in conducting performance management. A rater may gather feedback to prepare the appraisal document and/or conduct unofficial appraisals more frequently than required in this policy.

### **PROBATIONARY PERIODS**

Each new employee in probationary status shall be rated prior to the completion of a twelve month probationary period. The performance review date marks the beginning of a new review period. If an employee does not receive 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 and permanent status in the class. The probationary period may not be extended. 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. If an employee is not performing satisfactorily during the probationary period, the employee must be terminated before becoming a covered employee. Until an employee has completed the probationary period and has a "successful" or higher overall rating on the employee's performance evaluation, the employee has no grievance rights under the State Employee Grievance Procedure Act; therefore, an agency is not required to follow the "Substandard Performance Process" to terminate a probationary employee. The "successful" rating is the equivalent to the "meets" performance rating referenced in the State Employee Grievance Procedure Act.

### **ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEWS**

All employees shall be given an annual appraisal no more than 90 calendar days prior to the employee's performance review date. An employee on approved leave with or without pay for

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more than 30 consecutive workdays may have the performance review date advanced up to 90 days after those first 30 workdays. A covered employee who within 30 calendar days of his performance review date receives a "Warning Notice of Substandard Performance" shall have the performance review date advanced up to 90 days. If the review date advances, the employee may require a short-year planning stage and a short-year review in order to move the employee to the universal review date.

The performance review date marks the beginning of a new review period. If an employee does not receive an appraisal prior to the performance review date, the employee shall receive a "successful" rating by default. A covered employee may not be issued an overall "unsuccessful" appraisal at any time during the annual review period without following the "Substandard Performance Process."

The rater will complete the annual appraisal review based on the employee's performance for the entire review period. Once the rater has completed the appraisal document, it will be presented to the reviewing officer for signature. The rater will then schedule a meeting with the employee to discuss his/her performance and obtain the employee's signature on the appraisal document.

### **TRIAL PERIODS**

Each covered employee who has been demoted, promoted, or reclassified will be appraised prior to the completion of a six month trial period in the position. The performance review date marks the beginning of the new review period. If an employee does not receive a performance appraisal prior to the performance review date, the employee will receive a "successful" rating by default and obtain permanent status in the new classification. Once an employee has completed a successful trial period and obtained permanent status in a class, the employee retains permanent status in the class throughout the employee's continuous service. The six month trial period may be extended up to 90 calendar days upon written notice to the employee prior to the end of the six month trial period. The employee's performance review date shall be advanced for the time period such extension is in effect. After satisfactory completion of the trial period, the employee may require a short-year planning stage and a short-year review in order to move the employee to the universal review date.

The "Substandard Performance Process" is not required to demote or reclassify downward an employee in trial status to the same class from which promoted, if the demotion or reclassification occurs within the trial period. The "Substandard Performance Process" is also not required to demote or reclassify downward an employee in trial status to a class in an equal or higher pay band from which promoted, if the demotion or reclassification occurs within the trial period. The employee in trial status may not grieve such demotion. The employee in trial status may not be terminated or demoted to a class in a lower pay band than that from which promoted for performance reasons without following the "Substandard Performance Process."

### **SUBSTANDARD PERFORMANCE PROCESS FOR COVERED EMPLOYEES**

A covered employee is 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. To ensure this occurs, the following procedures shall be followed:

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- A rater shall issue a “Warning Notice of Substandard Performance” prior to issuing an “unsuccessful” rating to a covered employee. If during the performance period an employee’s performance is considered “unsuccessful” in any essential job function which significantly impacts performance, the rater shall provide the employee with a written “Warning Notice of Substandard Performance.” The warning notice shall provide for an improvement period of no less than 30 days and no more than 120 days. The warning notice may be issued at any time during the review period. Ordinarily, the warning notice may not extend beyond the employee’s performance review date. However, if the warning notice is issued less than 30 days before the employee’s performance review date, the performance review date shall be advanced up to 90 days. Should the review date roll and the employee receives a “successful” or above rating on all essential job functions which significantly impact performance noted in the warning notice, the employee may require a short-year planning stage and a short-year review in order to move the employee to the universal review date.
- The rater and employee should participate in drafting a work improvement plan. The work improvement plan should include a list of ways to improve the deficiencies and other appropriate performance-related recommendations. 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.
- During the warning period, the employee and the rater will have regularly scheduled meetings during which they will discuss the employee’s progress. Documentation is required to verify that these counseling sessions were held. Copies of this documentation shall be placed in the employee’s official personnel file and given to the employee upon request.
- If the employee’s performance is rated “successful” or above on all essential job functions/objectives which significantly impact performance noted in the warning notice by the end of the warning period, employment shall continue. If the employee is rated “unsuccessful” on any essential job function or objective which significantly impacts performance as noted in the warning notice by the end of the warning period, the employee shall be removed from the position immediately (i.e., terminated, reassigned, demoted).
- Once a time frame for improving substandard performance has been given, the employee must receive a written appraisal prior to the end of the warning period or the employee will receive a “successful” rating by default.
- If an employee has been issued two warning notices within a 365 day period and performance drops to a substandard level on any essential job function or objective which significantly impacts performance for a third time within a 365 day period, the employee shall be removed from the position upon the third recurrence of such substandard performance by issuing the “unsuccessful” appraisal. A warning notice is not required on the third occurrence.

### **WARNING NOTICE OF SUBSTANDARD PERFORMANCE**

The requirements of a “Warning Notice of Substandard Performance” are:

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- The notice shall be submitted to the Human Resources Administrator or his/her designee for review, prior to the written document being given to the employee.
- The notice shall be in writing, addressed to the employee, labeled as a "Warning Notice of Substandard Performance," and signed by the employee (witnessed, if employee will not sign).
- The notice shall list the job function(s) and/or objective(s) included on the employee's planning document that are considered "unsuccessful" with an explanation of the deficiencies for each job function and/or objective.
- The notice shall include the time period for improvement and the consequences if no improvement is noted (i.e., termination, demotion, reassignment).
- The notice shall include a plan for meetings to discuss employee progress during the warning period.

A copy of the notice shall be given to the employee and the original notice placed in the employee's official personnel file.

### **WEIGHTED SYSTEM**

In order to reduce subjectivity in the evaluation, a numerical value will be assigned to each level of performance. The supervisor and the employee will determine a weight for each individual job function and objective. Performance characteristics will not be given a numerical score but will be given a rating of "Pass" or "Fail."

### **LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE (JOB FUNCTIONS AND OBJECTIVES):**

		<u>Ranges</u>
Exceptional (E) -	3	2.5 and above
Successful (S) -	2	1.5 to 2.4
Unsuccessful (U)	1	1.4 and below

### **Performance Characteristics Ratings:**

Pass (P)  
Fail (F)

### **Example of Weighted System:**

	<u>Weight Factor</u>	<u>Rating</u>	<u>Numerical Score</u>
4 Functions	40%	S	40 x 2 = 80
	25%	E	25 x 3 = 75
	20%	S	20 x 2 = 40
	10%	S	10 x 2 = 20
1 Objective	5%	E	5 x 3 = 15
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>		<b>230</b>

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3 Characteristics

P  
P  
P

Divide the total numerical score of 230 points by the total weight factor of 100% and get 2.3, which gives the employee an overall performance evaluation of "Successful." If the overall rating falls between two levels of performance, the rating is to be rounded down (example: 2.45 = 2.4 not 2.5).

### **EPMS PERFORMANCE CHARACTERISTICS**

#### **FUNCTIONAL QUALITIES**

**Technical Competence:** Possesses necessary knowledge to effectively perform job and able to apply what he/she has learned about his/her job. Acquires new knowledge/skills/abilities as required by the job.

**Quality of Work:** The extent to which the employee neatly, thoroughly, and accurately completes job assignments according to established standards of quality. Continuously improves quality of work.

**Problem Analysis:** Able to identify problems and relevant issues and breaks problems into components. Sees relationship and alternative solutions and arrives at sound conclusions through a logical process.

#### **PERSONAL QUALITIES**

**Self-Management:** Works with minimal supervision, manages own time effectively, maintains control over all current projects/responsibilities. Follows up on all relevant issues.

**Judgment:** Able to reason, compares, understands, and thinks rationally on the job. Makes quality work-related decisions based on sound conclusions/data. Able to separate facts from opinions.

**Leadership:** Employee can be relied upon to guide others to the accomplishment of objectives/responsibilities, to promote teamwork, and to resolve problems.

**Initiative:** Starts assignments without prompting and independently contributes ideas and projects. Sees and acts upon new opportunities. Thinks and acts independently and promptly addresses problems.

**Dependability/Reliability:** Employee can be relied upon to meet work schedules and fulfill job responsibilities and commitments. Meets deadlines and follows instructions.

#### **INTERPERSONAL QUALITIES**

**Customer Service:** To effectively and efficiently meet the needs of those served by continually assessing performance based on customer feedback.

**Listening Skills:** Asks meaningful questions and listens closely and respectfully before offering comments.

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Acceptance: Gains confidence of others and earns respect of subordinates, peers and superiors. Values diversity and respects opposing opinions.

Teamwork: Degree to which one works effectively and cooperatively with others and other departments in achieving organizational goals. Degree of responsiveness to organizational needs.

Adaptability: Employee can adapt to job or organizational changes. Readily accepts new responsibilities and assignments.

Communication: Ability of employee to present accurate information to other employees, peers, and superiors in an effective manner.

## **MANAGEMENT CHARACTERISTICS**

### **Management Functions**

#### Planning and Organizing

- Organizes department's work to meet the mission of the agency.
- Establishes a course of action for meeting an objective.
- Allocates resources and personnel for best effect within budget limits.
- Develops schedules for activities and projects.
- Sets and observes priorities in order to avoid backlogged work.
- Effectively matches short-term goals to contribute toward longer-range plans.

#### Controlling

- Monitors, regulates, and facilitates employees' activities.
- Establishes and maintains effective procedures to monitor and control activities within the employee's responsibility.
- Monitors the progress and results of delegated assignments and keeps informed of developments in area of responsibility.

#### Delegating

- Allocates responsibilities to employees to help develop their career potential.
- Uses staff members effectively by allocating decisions and other responsibilities to the appropriate employees.
- Provides clear instructions and leadership so delegated tasks are properly completed.
- Establishes and empowers teams, where appropriate, to improve work systems and processes.

#### Motivating

- Creates an organizational environment or climate in which employees can perform to the best of their ability.
- Establishes employee motivation by giving employees timely and regular recognition and feedback for work performed.
- Ensures that employees are aware of the possibility of advancement and growth.
- Develops a sense of trust, respect, and responsibility.

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### Developing

- Develops a learning environment for both employee and supervisor by continuing education and training to stay abreast of the current state-of-the-art in one's field.
- Makes training projections based on current trends and future goals.
- Determines learning and training needs. Allocates resources to provide necessary training.
- Selects appropriate learning activities.
- Promotes Equal Opportunity: Promotes agency affirmative action goals in such areas as hiring, promotion, or placement; level of personal and organizational commitment to equal opportunity; progress toward achieving a fully integrated and representative work force; and contribution toward minority programs and other social/economic equal opportunity goals. All management/supervisory employees are required to be rated on this characteristic.

### **Management Skills**

#### Quality Focus

- Fosters culture of continuous improvement through ongoing assessment of agency processes and systems.
- Focuses on customer service.
- Promotes teamwork.
- Strives for quality work products.

#### Internal Environmental Focus

- Knows the impact of decisions and actions on individuals and other parts of the agency.
- Maintains open communication with peers in other departments.
- Understands the agency's organization and methods.
- Knows and accepts the agency's mission, goals, and objectives.

#### External Environmental Focus

- Knows and allows for influences outside the agency. Anticipates factors that may alter the agency's mission.
- Stays abreast of events in government that could affect the agency.
- Regularly reads news and business-related publications to stay abreast of information that impacts the agency.

#### Independence

- Acts on the basis of own thoughts, not the influence of others.
- Works without close supervision.
- Seeks approval and advice in situations outside personal authority and expertise.

#### Tenacity

- Overcomes obstacles to the attainment of a goal through sound problem-solving techniques.
- Pursues goals until they are achieved or their attainment is no longer reasonable.

#### Initiative

- Initiates action.

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- Actively attempts to influence events that can affect the achievement of goals.
- Does not readily accept circumstances that interfere with the attainment of goals.
- Regularly originates ideas and activities.

### Self Control

- Maintains composure under provocative circumstances.
- Responds constructively to challenges and criticism.
- Maintains professional demeanor while dealing with difficult situations.

### Stress Tolerance

- Performs well under pressure.
- Maintains composure, good judgment, and adequate performance levels under pressure caused by deadlines, workload, opposition, and other causes.

### Versatility

- Stays well informed about a broad range of job-related interests.
- Keeps informed about other parts of the agency.
- Is aware of changes in the agency.
- Readily embraces appropriate changes to agency processes and systems.

### Creativity

- Adopts initiative, imaginative solutions to work-related problems.
- Generates innovative solutions and ideas regularly.
- Encourages and acknowledges ideas from the employees, co-workers and other sources.

### Decisiveness

- Readily makes decisions, judgments, and commitments.
- Identifies decisions that require research and deliberation.
- Effectively establishes priorities based on agency needs.
- Seeks necessary information and advice.
- Allows ample time for fact-finding and deliberation, when possible.
- Makes decisions within the time limits required by the situation.
- Rejects tendencies to make premature decisions.

### Judgment

- Makes realistic and rational decisions.
- Bases decisions on logistical assumptions, relevant facts, and accurate data.
- Develops and analyzes alternative courses of action.
- Seeks advice and input of superiors, employees, and other appropriate sources.