

For: FAS, FSA, and RMA Employees, except Foreign Service Employees

FY 2003 Performance Appraisal System

Approved by: Deputy Administrator, Management



1 Overview

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Overview

Performance management is the system used to define, monitor, evaluate, and appraise employee performance. It is also used to make decisions about training, within grade increases, promotions, and other performance-related actions. Meaningful and frequent communication between supervisors and employees is vital for quality performance outcomes.

The FFAS (except for Foreign Service employees) performance appraisal cycle begins October 1 and ends September 30 of the following year.

Note: Performance plans for FY 2003 should have been **discussed, signed, and dated by October 30, 2002.**

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Purpose

This notice provides information to employees and supervisors to effectively and timely conform to FFAS performance management guidelines during the October 1, 2002, through September 30, 2003, performance appraisal cycle.

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Labor Relations Obligations

Where exclusive representation exists, this notice does not apply until bargaining takes place. Where contract language addresses these policies and procedures for bargaining unit employees, contract language prevails.

<p>Disposal Date</p> <p>November 1, 2003</p>	<p>Distribution</p> <p>All FAS, FSA, and RMA employees, except foreign service employees; State Offices relay to County Offices</p>
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2 Planning Performance

A Supervisor Action

Supervisors shall ensure that:

- a performance plan is established and discussed with the employee within **30 calendar days** of the appraisal cycle (October 30) or reassignment to a position

Note: Every plan must have **at least 1 critical element**. All agreed upon elements are critical for employees under the Pass/Fail system.

- a progress review must be conducted when an employee reaches the approximate midpoint between the date the employee's performance plan was issued and the end of the appraisal period unless the length of this period is less than 90 calendar days

Note: Quarterly reviews are encouraged and may be initiated by the employee. **The midyear review should be completed and documented no later than May 31.**

- the minimum appraisal period under an approved performance plan is 90 calendar days and no longer than 15 months for a rating of record to be conducted; the appraisal period could be extended to allow employees to complete an Opportunity to Improve or Performance Improvement Plan before their rating of record

Notes: When a rating of record cannot be prepared by the end of the designated appraisal period (September 30), the appraisal period shall be extended 90 calendar days. Once the minimum appraisal period has been completed, a rating of record **must** be issued.

The employee's signature indicates receipt of the rating, it does not represent agreement with the rating. If the employee refuses to sign the rating of record, the rating official should note this in the appropriate block and indicate the date the rating was issued.

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2 Planning Performance (Continued)

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Supervisor Action (Continued)

- at the conclusion of a detail or temporary promotion, the rating official to whom the employee was detailed will **document** the employee's accomplishments and **forward** the information to the employee's permanent supervisor

Note: This guidance applies to any employee detailed within USDA. When an employee is detailed outside the Department, the **permanent supervisor should make a concerted effort to obtain information about the employee's performance before completing the annual performance rating of record.**

- after discussing each element and standard, request that the employee sign and date the performance plan and provide a signed copy to the employee.

Notes: Electronic signatures are acceptable for current ICAMS users. Presenting hard copies of the performance plan to these employees are not required. The ICAMS electronic performance plan is the "filed" performance plan, and does not have to be stored/filed in a hard copy Employee Performance File (EPF).

Where there is a disagreement as to the content of performance elements and standards, the rating official's decision prevails. If the employee refuses to sign the performance plan after discussion with the rating official, the rating official should note this in the appropriate block. **Lack of the employee's signature and date on the performance does not negate implementing the plan.**

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2 Planning Performance (Continued)

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**Departure/
Interim
Appraisals**

In a narrative form or by using the applicable performance appraisal documents, AD-435's for employees under 5-tier system, AD-2000 for FSA and RMA employees under Pass/Fail, or Form 4140 for State and County Office employees under Pass/Fail, supervisors shall prepare departure/interim ratings when any of the following occur.

Note: For ICAMS users, access the “Progress Review Page” and add the departure/interim rating in the “Reviewer Comment” block.

- **Supervisory Change.** Each individual who supervised an employee for 90 calendar days or more during the appraisal period should discuss the performance with the employee, prepare feedback comments and forward them to the current rating official.
- **Position and Supervisory Change.** When an employee who has occupied a position for at least 90 calendar days leaves that position, **the supervisor or rating official should prepare feedback comments on the employee's performance and forward them to the new supervisor/rating official.**
- **Position Change Without a Supervisory Change.** When an employee changes position, but retains the same supervisor (that is, the employee was promoted or reassigned within the same organization), **the supervisor should prepare written documentation of the employee's performance. This information must be considered in the employee's rating of record.**

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Notice PM-2336

2 Planning Performance (Continued)

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Policy and Performance

For policy and instructions for performance planning offices under the:

Plan Instructions

- **5-tier rating system** refer to 5-PM or <http://dc.ffasintranet.usda.gov/hrd/pmmain.htm> and link to applicable sites
 - **Pass/Fail System** refer to the following, as applicable:
 - FSA and RMA National Offices and RMA non-bargaining offices (except Kansas City) refer to <http://dc.ffasintranet.usda.gov/hrd/pmmain.htm>
 - FSA Kansas City Offices and State and County Offices under Pass/Fail, refer to <http://dc.ffasintranet.usda.gov/hrd/pmmain.htm> and/or the CAMS Users Manual.
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Contacts

If additional information is needed, contact the appropriate individual according to this table.

IF the supervisor is located in...	THEN contact...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAS • RMA 	Performance Management, Benefits, and Awards Branch, HRD at 202-418-8973 or TTY 202-418-9116.
1 of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APFO • KCCO • KCAO • KCFO • KC-ITSTO • KC-ITSDO • State Offices 	KCAO, PD, Employee and Labor Relations Branch at 816-926-6643 or TTY 816-926-3063.
County Office	State Office.

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Filing Grievances

Nonbargaining unit employees must grieve their performance appraisals under the Agency grievance procedure. Bargaining unit employees must use the negotiated grievance procedure.
